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THE CANADIAN FORUM

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Revelation According to Hansard

By DAVID LEWIS

St. Francis of Antigonish

By J. KING GORDON

Somerset Maugham

By L. A. MacKAY

The Webbs on Russia

By F. H. UNDERHILL

W. BURTON HURD

MARVIN GELBER

V. W. BLADEN

G. CAMPBELL McINNES

LOUIS MUHLSTOCK

MAY, 1936

TWENTY-FIVE CENTS

THE CANADIAN FORUM

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Publishers

The Canadian Forum Limited,
225 Richmond Street West, Toronto

Subscription rate—Two dollars per annum to
any address.

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Drawings by Louis Muhlstock

CONTRIBUTORS

V. W. BLADEN is a member of the Faculty of Political Economy at the University of Toronto and is editor of the Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science. Utopian Individualism is reprinted through the courtesy of the Commerce Club, before whom it was delivered as an address.

J. KING GORDON was formerly Professor of Christian Ethics at the United Theological College of Montreal.

CARLTON McNAUGHT, who has had wide experience as a newspaperman, is now engaged in the advertising business.

DOROTHY LIVESAY is the author of a volume of verse and her work is well known to Canadian readers of poetry.

LOUIS MUHLSTOCK is a young Montreal painter who is rapidly achieving a distinguished reputation both in Canada and abroad. The drawing which appears on page 15, entitled "The Last Supper", appeared at the Canadian National Exhibition, 1935.

THE CANADIAN FORUM

Vol. XVI.

Toronto, May, 1936

No. 184

CHISELLERS ON RELIEF

THROUGHOUT the long and noisy session of the Ontario Legislature there was very little debate on the Administration's relief policy, although relief expenditures form the largest single item in the provincial budget. The reason is that the Administration is quietly carrying through a program of substantial reductions in relief grants to municipal authorities, and the Tories are no more anxious than the Liberals that this policy be given unfavourable publicity. An examination of the estimates made public in the Premier's budget speech shows that the government hopes to balance the budget in 1936 by spending about eight million dollars less for relief.

In announcing its policy of reduced contributions to municipalities the government makes much of the need for purging the relief rolls of 'chisellers'. If many persons in this category have been receiving relief it is a serious reflection on the efficiency of the government's own officials. Actually all this pother about chisellers is propaganda to forestall public sympathy for the unemployed when the relief reductions are applied. Typical of the mind of Ontario Liberalism is the government's expression of disapproval of the low wages which force many full time workers to secure partial relief, and its proposal to correct this condition by the single expedient of stopping relief to such workers. Significant also is the surprising lack of protest from municipal councils at the very substantial reductions in their relief grants, whether their political complexion has been Tory or Liberal. Only in East York, Windsor and a few other places with strong C.C.F. or Labour municipal representation has there been any vigorous protest.

As we go to press the Federal government has announced a 15 percent cut in its relief grants and the Provincial government has promptly passed this on to the municipalities. After six years of depression the care of the unemployed is still a buck to be passed back and forth between Federal and Provincial and Municipal governments in accord with political expediency and without regard for the condition of the unemployed. The major share of responsibility for this chaotic condition rests with the Federal governments, both Liberal and Conservative, for their consistent refusal to carry an adequate share of the relief burden. But Mr. King can take refuge, for a few more months, behind the statement that no major changes can be considered

until the National Employment Commission has made its report.

RELIEF—A PROBLEM WITH NO SOLUTION

ANNOUNCEMENT of the personnel of the National Employment Commission has brought little surprise and quelled few misgivings. The Minister of Labour had already stated, in reply to representation from the Toronto Trades and Labour Council, that no representative of organized labour would be appointed. On April 18, the Toronto Star carried a report that the government wanted a chairman "with wide experience in industry and employment" and mentioned the name of Mr. Arthur Purvis of Canadian Industries Ltd., the actual appointee. It is not difficult to predict the activities of a commission composed of big business tycoons, a few decorative social workers of the correct political persuasion and without representatives of labour or the unemployed. The commission will spend several months educating itself in the rudimentary acts about unemployment and relief and at the end of several more it will produce a series of recommendations which were truisms to every intelligent relief administrator three years ago. No informed person hopes for anything more constructive than a recommendation that the Federal government assume a larger share of relief costs. The whole thing will be a farce and an indefensible waste of public funds.

The plain fact is that there is no satisfactory solution to the problem of unemployment within the axioms of capitalism in its present phase of restriction of production. In Canada today there is not even a satisfactory method of caring for the unemployed which has the remotest chance of actually being adopted. As long as unemployment remains at anything like its present level governments are faced with three unpleasant alternatives. They may continue to borrow the tremendous sums necessary to finance relief, they may increase substantially the taxes on wealth or they may reduce expenditures by drastic relief cuts. Up to the present, the borrowing method has been followed by every government of any significance in Canada. It is doubtful whether this method can provide even a temporary solution for much longer. Governments are faced with the grim choice of raising business, income and inheritance taxes to something like the British level or drastically reducing relief grants. There is every

indication that they will try the latter first. Nothing can prevent widespread and disastrous relief cuts except equally widespread and vigorous organization among the disinherited for the protection of the meagre standards which they now enjoy.

THE PRAIRIE WHEAT

THE bulletins issued by Professor Wm. Allen and his associates in the department of Farm Management of the University of Saskatchewan have won a high reputation among all persons interested in the problems of the western wheat farmer. It is interesting, therefore, to note what they have to say in their latest publication, *The Farm Outlook for Saskatchewan, 1936*. They believe a moderate optimism to be justified, but this optimism is based only upon a comparison of present prospects with the terrible experience of recent years.

"Saskatchewan farmers continue to derive the bulk of their revenues from sales of wheat. The average farm price of the 1935 crop is officially estimated at 60 cents per bushel, which is one cent less than that of the previous year. The crop harvested was about 18 per cent. larger than that of 1934, 47 per cent. of that inspected up to the end of January being below No. 3 Northern. The last seven years have played havoc with Saskatchewan farming. During the five years from 1924 to 1928 the average annual value of our provincial wheat crop was about 240 million dollars. The 1929 wheat crop had about two-thirds of the value of that of 1928; the 1930 crop, two-fifths; the small crop of 1931, one-fifth; the 1932 crop, one quarter; the crop of 1933, one fifth; that of 1934, the smallest total yield since 1920, one quarter; and that of 1935, about one third. Indebtedness continues to be a problem of general concern. Despite the improvement reported, it would require more than one-half of all the wheat available for sale from the 1935 crop of the province to pay the interest on the present farm debt; and to meet the current tax levies at least one-sixth of this revenue would be demanded." The Saskatchewan Farm Management department conducts detailed surveys each year of selected farms in different parts of the province. Last year it found that 698 farms in the south-central part of the province, having an area of 393,353 acres, reported a total debt of \$6,820,400, which makes an average of \$9,771 per farm or about \$22 per acre of crop land.

It is against such a background as this that prospects for 1936 look a little better. As they sum up in restrained language, "Saskatchewan farmers will continue to find economical methods of farming imperative and will be forced to operate with the minimum of cash expenditures". It is a pity that certain eastern politicians and business men who are conducting a noisy campaign against the demands of the West for continued financial assistance could not be given a little personal experience of what continued "economical methods of farming" really mean to the population of Saskatchewan and the prairie generally.

J. W. DAFOE

A FEW weeks ago the Winnipeg Free Press celebrated the seventieth birthday of its editor by giving him a great public dinner which was attended

by distinguished citizens from all over Canada. The Canadian Forum joins in the congratulations which have poured in upon Mr. Dafoe on this occasion. Under his editorship the Free Press has become our most important Canadian daily. He has made for himself a position of unchallenged eminence in the Canadian journalism of our day, a position that can only be compared with that of Brown or Willison on the Globe in days past. And he has done it by the simple process of always saying exactly what he thinks on issues of the day, of saying it clearly, simply and trenchantly, and of saying it over and over again. His success, and the success of his paper in its community, provide a standing challenge to the accepted doctrines of modern journalism that a metropolitan newspaper must be non-committal about everything that matters. But, of course, the habit of saying what you think has little ultimate value in society unless what you think is based upon long and thorough study of the questions about which you are thinking. And the distinctive reason for Mr. Dafoe's eminence in his profession is that he has always been a student. He actually reads books, and is probably the only surviving newspaperman in Canada who still keeps up this old-fashioned habit. He also writes books. We hope that he will now take time off from writing editorials to write his own reminiscences of Canadian political life as he has observed it and participated in it since the 1880's. We say this not because we find ourselves in disagreement with so many of his editorials nowadays, but because he owes it to future historians to give us the benefit of his inside knowledge concerning so many famous incidents in Canadian politics during the last fifty years and of his mature reflections upon this complex community of which we are citizens.

NOTE BY F.H.U.

Mr. Gelber on page 17 entirely misreads the purport of my article in the last number of the Canadian Forum, and of Mr. Reid's articles, when he accuses us of anti-French bias and of supporting Hitler. The argument of my article was that Canadians should resist the temptation to take sides in Europe, because we cannot be sure of the genuine purposes of either side and because taking sides in the heavily armed Europe of today means that we shall be entangled in the next European war. Mr. Gelber wants to take sides in Europe because he can see nothing there but Hitler. His position is, of course, an arguable one, but he should drop the pretense of his first sentence that he is aiming at the preservation of peace in Europe. All the rest of his article shows that what he is really aiming at is a war against Hitler. Having myself taken part in a fairly recent war for the elimination of Kaiserism from Europe, a war which eliminated Kaiserism only to replace it by Hitlerism, I have lost my faith in the effectiveness of the policy of burying more Canadians in that continent—whether we profess to bury them for the sake of liberalism or democracy or socialism or communism.



Revelation According to Hansard

DAVID LEWIS

If anyone still has doubts about the bankruptcy of orthodox thought on our national problems let him visit the House of Commons and listen to our leading statesmen propound their views. Or if distance makes this impossible, let him read Hansard, although he must in fairness be warned that there are few things more depressing than the hopelessness which emerges from a study of those pages.* For there is a profound sense of unreality about many of the discussions. In part this is undoubtedly due to the composition of the House. Of the two hundred and forty-five members only about six describe themselves as workers and thirty-nine as farmers. Even of these one suspects that the majority are essentially removed from the real plight of the worker and farmer. The rest are lawyers, doctors, merchants and the like. Giving them all possible credit for sympathy and imagination, it is, nevertheless, obvious that a greater proportion of men and women coming straight from the factory, the mine, the breadline, or the farm or, at least, of men and women who have identified their lives and activities with those of the masses of the people, would impose upon parliament a greater sense of the urgency of the human problems involved in political debate. This sense is too often lacking in the endless discussions on Parliament Hill.

From time to time the leaders on both sides of the House dive into the swamp of squabbles over details of procedure,—a sport which has no other than entertainment value of the light opera variety. And occasionally the worker and farmer will strike a really encouraging exchange of compliments such as the following (at p.57):

"Mr. Bennett: . . ., for as indicating his (Mr. Dunning's) improved fitness for his great position I omitted to state that he had also been president of a milling corporation. I express my regret.

Mr. Dunning: I only yield to my right hon. friend in the amount of money he made out of the grain business.

Mr. Bennett: I think there is not much doubt that the Maple Leaf did not make much for its shareholders.

Mr. Dunning: But the Alberta Pacific did.

Mr. Bennett: It certainly did. I sold my shares at \$325.00. But that was not nearly so good as the shares of Canada Cement.

Mr. Dunning: I never had any of those."

THE reader of Hansard will find many such opportunities for amusement or annoyance, depending on his temperament and mood. He will find Mr. T. L. Church (Broadview, Toronto) declare (at p. 250),

*—A purely whimsical but not uninteresting calculation yielded the following results: During forty-four parliamentary working days hon. members uttered some two million words, i.e. between forty and forty-five thousand words per day, or more than seven thousand words per hour.

"We must dedicate our efforts to the solution of the unemployment problem, and one very effective means of bringing that about is to restore the condition that existed under Sir John Macdonald and Sir Wilfrid Laurier, and under Whitney and Beck." He will learn from no less an authority than Mr. R. B. Bennett (at p. 1992) that what has made the unemployment problem "much more acute than it ever has been" is that "now, having been placed on relief by the cities and provinces, they (i.e., the unemployed) have no incentive to save, when they do work during the summer and fall, to carry them through the next winter. They know that they will be taken care of on, shall I say, a more generous scale of apportionment of food and clothing than they have gained by their own efforts, or through savings they have made during the summer and fall." Perhaps such statements require no comment.

The back benchers in the House present a striking contrast to the back benchers in the British Parliament. The two orthodox parties in England reflect to some extent the universal unrest in that there have grown up within them strong, vocal groups aware of the need for some change and daring to be disrespectful to and critical of their leaders. Not so our back benchers. With the exception of one or two monetary reformers among the Liberals, and one or two others in both parties who from habit use strong language which deceives no one, there is no protesting voice among them. This is regrettable not only because it is indicative of mental sluggishness, but also because a militant progressive group in the Liberal Party could do more to press action out of the government than all the opposition groups combined.

About the Social Credit group it is difficult to write without being unkind. Yet it would be unfair to appear unappreciative of people whose sincerity cannot be questioned and who deserve credit for their determination not to tolerate the 'paradox of poverty amidst plenty',—one of the contradictions of capitalism to which, by the way, Marx drew attention some eighty years ago. Nevertheless it must be said that their sincerity is not enough to condone the shallowness and absurdity of the case which they present in their speeches. The group cannot be said to be making any impact on the House, and as the situation in Alberta continues to develop they will soon cease to make any impression on the country.

The present writer makes no pretense at impartiality, but it is not partisanship which moves him to declare that the little C.C.F. group of seven stands head and shoulders above any other party in the House of Commons. This is true not only of their intelligence and debating ability, but also of their alertness and industry. Every question discussed is carefully followed by some, at least, of the C.C.F. members, and no opportunity of voicing the demands of worker and farmer alike is let slip. This becomes even more admirable when one remembers that their battle in parliament is lost even before it is begun.

WHETHER good or indifferent, however, the opposition groups in the present parliament are of little consequence. It is the government's policy that is of immediate concern to the people of Canada. Three subjects of prime importance were debated at length during the first two months of the new parliament, and from those debates emerges the government policy towards the complex Canadian problem. To gauge the worth of that policy it is useful briefly to indicate the background against which the present government operates.

We are just emerging from a long and severe depression whose effects remain with us almost undiminished. For the past five years the present ministers watched the unplanned and ineffectual muddling of a conservative government. They also watched, or should have watched, the effects of the depression and the reaction of governments throughout the world. They saw, or should have seen, the results of various policies in countries like the United States, England, Sweden, and Russia. What all this means, in short, is that when the present government came to power it was faced with an old and not a new problem, and it had the experience not only of our own country, but of the entire western world as a guide in the formulation of its policy. Finally it has an impregnable majority in the House, and behind that a popular temper growing daily more impatient and expressing a readiness to stand almost anything but inactivity. This, in its turn, means that the government could have undertaken as bold and courageous a policy as it wished without any likelihood of endangering either its power in parliament or its popularity in the country.

Against this background the policy of the government emerges as barren and hopeless. The Canada-United States trade treaty may be disregarded. Insofar as it means a slight contribution towards lessening the economic nationalism it is a good thing. But beyond this its value as a solution to our economic problems is exactly nil, and the experience of all countries,—the experience, in fact, of the entire history of capitalism,—is conclusive against any assumption that the old debate on tariffs has much relevance to national well-being. There remain, then, the two other major government bills, that relating to relief and public works and that relating to the creation of a national employment commission.

One hesitates to criticize the Minister of Labour or any one whose job it is to attempt to solve the problem of unemployment. The task is not simple or easy. It is terribly complex and difficult, and any solution must necessarily take time. In addition, it is also true that the previous government left the matter in a chaotic state, and that more exact information is necessary before any solution can be effectively applied. Yet when all this is said in extenuation, the government still stands condemned as entirely lacking any definite policy. Its policy is, upon analysis, not at all different in principle from that of the previous government, and there is no earthly reason to expect that the results will be different.

THE exact functions of the National Employment Commission are still unknown not only, it seems

evident, to the public, but even to the government itself. It is clear that at first it will be only a fact-finding body. It is also clear that the Minister intends to ask for its advice, but whether it is to be given administrative powers, and, if so, what they are to be, remains unanswered. One is forced to the conclusion that Mr. Rogers has little idea as to what will eventually have to be done, but he is hoping. He is hoping that with exact statistical information before him and six wise men behind him, some co-ordinated plan may evolve.

The government speeches contain the implication that without a scientific classification of the unemployed into their age, sex, occupational groups and the like, the exact nature of the problem cannot be known, and hence a solution cannot be formulated. This is manifestly untenable, and is the crudest kind of empiricism as well as the most transparent self-deception. For the unemployed, no matter how carefully they may be classified, represent the effect and not the cause of the problem. Given a policy, such information as the government seeks would help towards its effective administration. Without a policy the information will not mean one day's work or one cent in wages.

This uncertainty does not mean, however, that we are completely in the dark. On the contrary, government statements as to what they do not intend to do show very clearly the limits of what they are likely to undertake. A request to extend the old age pensions to the blind above forty, an act of social kindness that would have cost the government a negligible half million dollars per year—was rejected by the Minister of Finance in these words (at p. 970): "The government believes that at the present time we require to keep a very tight hand with respect to new commitments, and therefore I cannot hold out hope to the House that we shall propose legislation at this session regarding this matter". Mr. Rogers is the Minister directly concerned, and his statements of policy are equally clear. He says, speaking on a resolution relating to housing, slum clearance and similar matters, "It seems to me that we have reached a point in the state of our public finances when we are compelled to consider the deterrent effect of large governmental expenditures and increasing deficits upon the flow of savings into productive investments." Throughout that speech emphasis is laid on the need of keeping private business free from apprehension, in return for which the government "is determined to enlist the active service and support of organized industry and private citizens in dealing with the crucial problem of unemployment". Similarly his speech introducing the bill relating to the National Employment Commission does not hold out the slightest hope for increased government activity to cure unemployment.

Thus the policy, or lack of it, slowly becomes apparent. The government is to do no more than it has done in the past; nothing must be done which is likely to tread on the toe of private business; relief and public works are to be kept at that minimum which will prevent tax payers from kicking and the unemployed from starving. And the government no doubt hopes that the present trade improvement will continue, and that the people can be relied upon to give credit where credit is not due.

In Praise of Censorship

ERIC HAVELOCK

A KEEN student of the Bible in the United States has announced that the earth is flat. The odd thing is that more people have not believed him. The earth so obviously looks flat; its spherical shape is purely a matter of hearsay, since few can afford to test the matter by a round trip. Fortunately, great truths of this sort are hammered into us when we are children and docile, and afterwards stand unshaken. We can afford to tolerate the cause of a flat earth not as a dangerous lie but as a pleasing absurdity adding to the gaiety of nations in difficult times.

Nevertheless, this instance provides food for thought. Here is a statement publicly made, which is untrue; we can take science's word for it. Yet we do not suppress it, though we were also taught in childhood that lies were harmful and should be suppressed. We believe forsooth in freedom of thought and speech; so we allow this manifest untruth to propagate itself in the press and over the air. If the results are harmless, it is only because this is one of those untruths which mislead nobody because nobody wants to believe it anyway. But what of those subtler perversions of fact which can and do mislead thousands? People have been known to state, for example, that Russia is quite a good place to live in, or that war should be abolished, or that the unemployed are anxious to work. Lots of people are liable to believe this sort of thing, and as it is repeated, the tendency to believe spreads too, and before we know where we are, these dangerous half-truths have penetrated the home, the school, the college, and even the daily newspaper, though this last usually happens only through careless reporting. Is it not time we stopped repeating platitudes about the sacred right of free speech and asked ourselves, are we prepared to allow the propagation of falsehood merely because we dislike suppressing it?

The problem, as so often happens, has been solved for us not by any philosopher but by a Canadian corporation president, a man who knows all about railways. His words, delivered before the Canadian Chamber of Commerce and the Kiwanis Club of Toronto, deserve to be preserved: "We have allowed free speech and free thought—and rightly so. We have, however, too often forgotten that the free speech and the free teaching of those who are saying things which are not true is not protected by any sanctity".

Nothing could be neater. The prolonged controversy over free speech is at last settled—or nearly so. A college professor can say what he likes, provided he likes the truth. But if he speaks or writes what is not true, he must be stepped on. He has the solemn responsibility of teaching the young, and the young must be taught to be truthful.

Why has this simple solution not occurred to us before? Why do quite intelligent people still cling to the notion that only in the conflict of varying views and theories is progress to be found? Obviously because our minds are still mediaeval. We have failed to reckon with the full consequences of the march of modern science. Before the late nine-

teenth century, free speech was necessary, even if painful, as a step towards the discovery of truth, simply because we did not yet know the truth. Galileo had to drop things from a tower to show that v^2 equals u^1 plus $2fs$, or words to that effect. Now we all know it, just as we know that car loadings in the U.S. were down 5 per cent. last month. Science and statistics are revealing the world to us in all its wonder and mystery. These are the facts now available in ever increasing supplies—which the earnest instructor is able to unload on the young with conscious rectitude. His task is well described in the annual report of the President of the University of Toronto as follows: "The fundamental fact is that the task of the University is not propaganda but education; not to win a case, but to present the truth. A college instructor must of course have and hold his own convictions, but the all important thing is that he should do his work of investigation and teaching in the temper and spirit of science".

IT is not enough, however, merely to reach this conclusion; we have to apply it. If we are to teach the young only what is scientifically true, it remains to purge our universities of such portions of the curriculum as still deal with mere human opinions. The investigator will be surprised to find how large a proportion of a student's time is still wasted with this outmoded form of education. There is only one safe rule for the instructor: When a fact is a fact, teach it; but when it shows signs of turning into a judgment on right and wrong, maintain a reverent silence. The teacher is quite safe with the chemical formula for mustard gas; indeed, he can be encouraged to illustrate it by some pleasing minor smells in the laboratory. But the suggestion that the use of mustard gas to asphyxiate Ethiopians is unwarranted should at all costs be avoided. This after all is still a matter of controversy, concerning which the exact truth is unknown, if not unknowable. It therefore lies beyond the province of education. Car loadings are down in the United States, but to draw the conclusion that this represents a considerable sum of human misery and that somebody should be kicked in the seat of the pants for it, is not education but propaganda.

This is not to say that the so-called humanities should give way to science altogether, and be eliminated. But they should be taught with more scientific reserve. It is not after all the sciences that are making trouble these days for college presidents. No alumnus or taxpayer is going to withdraw his support because of a pamphlet on the sex history of the praying mantis or the refractory behaviour of colloids. Why can't the people who teach languages, literature, history and political science emulate this disciplined severity? Julius Caesar, treated scientifically, provides excellent material for translation—that is one thing. But to argue that the slaughter of a million Gauls was not a contribution to civilization is quite another. It is not an exact statement at all. It pulls the ancient Roman off his pedestal and makes him the subject of a painful controversy which will never be settled anyway. It debases the

humanities from the level of science to that of mere ethics. Lecturers in English, in order to stimulate a class, have been known to express a reckless preference for Shaw over Shakespeare. We must ban all such attempts to tamper with the opinions of the Best People, for in fields where scientific fact is unfortunately unattainable, received opinion will serve for fact just as well. Let us, therefore, drop this stuff about free speech and stick to the facts and where the facts are disputable, let us have the sense to keep our mouths shut. Then will college presidents be able to sleep soundly of nights, murmuring softly into their pillows, *Magna est veritas et praevalerebit*.

The Government and the Quints

CARLTON McNAUGHT

THE Dionne comedy (a divine comedy because it is divinely diverting, and a human comedy because it touches our common humanity) continues to provide copy for our papers. Papa Dionne recently revived sagging interest by applying to King Edward VIII to have the custody of the famous quintlets restored to their parents. Their mother, according to Papa Dionne, is "sad". The lights of Gotham failed to cheer Mama's drooping spirits. She bought "a few clothes, a hat or two, a coat, and a couple of simple dresses". But how can these baubles console a mother bereft of her five daughters by a heartless Mitch Hepburn?

Well might Papa Dionne go to the foot of the throne. But His Majesty, never having had quintuplets, may not be able to appreciate a mother's sorrows. Papa Dionne's habeas corpora (there are five bodies to be produced) may never even reach His Majesty's ear. The petition enabled the Toronto Star's London correspondent to reveal a long standing grudge against the press secretariat at Buckingham Palace for its "notorious discourtesy" to the press. The Star's telephone call was received with a blasé aloofness that would have done credit to the Frog Footman of immortal memory. What would Christopher Robin have thought if, when he "went down with Alice", she had told him that the King's henchman could be guilty of such hoity-toity manners?

But Papa Dionne's protest has raised a grave constitutional issue. Will a Liberal government at Ottawa interfere with a Liberal government at Queen's Park, and advise His Majesty to restore the quintuplets to their slighted parents? We think not. And we imagine that the Toronto Star (which has done pretty well out of the Quints) would be the last to foment a quarrel between two Liberal governments.

Meanwhile, the movie debut of the Famous Five continues to provoke letters to the editor. A much graver issue than any mere constitutional one emerges; nothing less than Canada's honour in the eyes of the world. Are we to be advertised abroad as a nation which leaves its hinterland in the grip of disease epidemics, while country doctors commit lèse majesté in the presence of governors-general at medical dinners in Montreal, and go on their knees to financial magnates in their plush-carpeted sanctums, in a frantic effort to "get that hospital"?

Moreover, is Slim Summerville to be offered as a type of our Northern Ontario sheriffs? Are Canada's geography and climate to be libelled by showing an airplane leaving Montreal with serum in the middle of summer and ending its swift flight at Callander in the middle of winter? Tourist bureaus of Canada, unite! Protest this foul calumny.

PAPA DIONNE himself dislikes the flippant manner in which the advent of his daughters is depicted in the film. It was no laughing matter, he maintains, to become the father of quintuplets. Mamma is silent. But, according to Dr. Dafoe, women are flocking to the Callander district in the hope of thereby becoming the mothers of quintlets. They remain obdurate when told by the good doctor that it is not as simple as that. Honeymoon couples continue to forsake Niagara Falls for Callander; and one pair, childless after fourteen years of married life, visited Callander in 1934 and returned with a child of their own. Can Dr. Dafoe be wrong? Anyway, this last fact should be made the most of. Could there be a fairer tribute to the bracing air of our north country? One swallow may not make a summer, but one birth may be used to conjure up a eugenic paradise.

It is scarcely fair to castigate Père and Mère Dionne for wanting their daughters back (if they really do). How would you feel if they were your children? Oh, but, you say, that is different! Of course we would prefer to have the custody of our children. All normal parents (meaning all sentimental parents) would feel the same way, even though their reason told them the children's interests would be best served by the government taking them over. We dislike to face the issue in the abstract. We hedge, and say: But these parents are not able to provide the scientific care and the favorable environment which these babies need. Well, how many of us are? And there is no valid argument for government ownership of quintuplets that does not apply equally to singlets. In fact, a singlet frequently has more need of it. "Only" children are notoriously in danger of being "spoiled".

This is a question that we parents (or our sons and daughters qua parents) may some day have to face. Ideal parentage or—government ownership of offspring. So I say to you generations yet unborn, government'll git you ef you don't watch out!



"UTOPIAN" INDIVIDUALISM

V. W. BLADEN

THIS article was provoked by, and may be considered as a review of, a pamphlet by Professor Henry Simons of the University of Chicago entitled "A Positive Program for Laissez Faire: Some Proposals for a Liberal Economic Policy".*

The belief that we are suffering from too much (rather than ill-conceived and unco-ordinated) government regulation, and that we can, and should, restore competitive conditions in order to make social control unnecessary is probably widespread in Canada. For the honest believer in competition and laissez-faire Professor Simons' pamphlet is invaluable. It makes clear the enormity of the task of restoring competitive conditions, and, by calling for intelligent management of the monetary system, and a deliberate policy of taxation and subsidized social services to correct inequality of income, it also makes clear the inadequacy of laissez-faire even in a perfectly competitive economy. Those who already distrust the policy of 'economic liberalism' will be strengthened in their doubt; those who believe in the policy may find their ardour cooled. It is to the latter that it is particularly recommended.

In his introduction Professor Simons states his objectives. "There is in America no important disagreement as to the proper objectives of economic policy—larger real income, greater regularity of production and employment, reduction of inequality, preservation of democratic institutions. The real issues have to do merely with means, not with ends." (p. 1). In part 1 is presented a minimum of general analysis or diagnosis. "The great errors of economic policy in the past century may be defined — and many of our present difficulties explained—in terms of excessive political interference with relative prices, and in terms of disastrous neglect of the positive responsibilities of government under a free enterprise system. Our governments have tinkered interminably with relative prices (witness the tariff). On the other hand they have never really tried to maintain effectively competitive conditions in industry (witness the 'rule of reason' and the absurd grants of powers to corporations). They have evaded—when they have not abused—their responsibility of controlling the currency (witness the growth of private banks which provide, and potentially can destroy all but a small percentage of our total effective circulating media). Moreover they have scarcely recognized the obligation, or the opportunities, of mitigating inequality through appropriate fiscal devices . . . Consequently, the so-called failure of capitalism, of the free enterprise system, of competition, may reasonably be interpreted as primarily a failure of the political state in the discharge of its minimum responsibilities under capitalism," (pp. 3-4). Laissez-faire is not merely a do-nothing policy. "The policy should be defined positively as one under which the state seeks to establish and maintain such conditions that it may

avoid the necessity of regulating 'the heart of the contract'—that is to say, the necessity of regulating relative prices." (p. 3).

THE 'positive' programme is outlined in part 11 under five heads: First, the elimination of private monopoly in all its forms, through drastic measures for establishing and maintaining effectively competitive conditions wherever possible, and through gradual transition to direct government ownership and operation where competition cannot be made to function effectively as an agency of control; second, the establishment of more definite and adequate rules of the game with respect to money, through the "abolition of private deposit banking on the basis of fractional reserves", and through the "creation of a system under which a federal monetary authority has a direct and inescapable responsibility for controlling (not with broad discretionary powers but under simple, definite rules laid down in legislation) the quantity or, through the quantity, the value of effective money"; third, drastic change in the tax system with a view to using it as an effective means to the reduction of inequality of wealth and income; fourth, gradual withdrawal of the enormous differential subsidies implicit in the present tariff system; fifth, limitation on the squandering of resources in advertising and selling activities. Some of the details of the programme are elaborated in the remainder of the pamphlet; three samples may be profitably examined here.

"The case for a liberal conservative policy must stand or fall on the first proposal, abolition of private monopoly; for it is the sine qua non of any such policy." (p. 18). The problem is, how to achieve this result, or rather, whether it is possible to achieve this result. Professor Simons seems to think it is possible. "Legislation must prohibit, and administration effectively prevent, the acquisition by any private firm, or group of firms, of substantial monopoly power, regardless of how reasonably that power may appear to be exercised. The Federal Trade Commission must become perhaps the most powerful of our governmental agencies . . . In short, restraint of trade must be treated as a major crime, and prosecuted unremittingly by a vigilant administrative body." (p. 19). Perhaps more reliance is placed, however, on the suggested revision of the incorporation laws; first, transfer to the federal government of the exclusive power to charter private corporations; second, provision that no corporations engaged in manufacture or merchandising shall own securities in any other such corporation; third, limitation upon the total amount of property which any single corporation may own, a general limitation for all corporations, and a further limitation designed to preclude the existence in any industry of a single company large enough to dominate that industry; fourth, incorporation of investment corporations under separate laws designed to preclude their becoming holding companies, or agencies of monopoly control, with limitations on their total property, on percentage holdings of securities of any single oper-

* Public Policy Pamphlet, No. 13. University of Chicago Press. 1934. pp. IV, 40 (25c).

ating company, and on total investment in any single industry; etcetera. The mere cataloguing of these details is surely enough to indicate the hopelessness of trying to create competitive conditions against the trend of history. To Professor Simons one may apply a passage in the Communist Manifesto referring to St. Simon, and other "utopian" socialists "Historical action is to yield to their personal inventive action, historically created conditions of emancipation to fantastic ones, and the spontaneous class organization of the proletariat to an organization of society specially contrived by these inventors. Future history resolves itself, in their eyes, into the propaganda and the practical carrying out of their social plans." (III, 3).

THE monetary policy advocated in the "positive programme of laissez-faire" is equally utopian, involving a reversal of the historical development of banking; but it is not a policy of laissez-faire! The monetary policy of laissez-faire is that of the Bullion Report of 1811 of Peel's Bank Charter Act of 1844; it involves a disbelief in the ability of the most intelligent and honest group of men to manage a currency. Professor Simons wants management; he differs from other advocates of management in that he wants a simple rule of management laid down with no discretion given to the managers. Almost any rule would be better than leaving 'discretion'; but he considers the rule of maintaining stable exchange rates inadequate and undesirable, and would suggest either a fixed quantity of money (M), or a fixed total turnover (MV), or stabilizing some index of commodity prices. The carrying out of this policy of management is to be made easier by the adoption of the 'Chicago' or '100 Percent Reserve' plan of banking reform. The essential features of the plan are: First, provision "for complete separation, between different classes of corporations, of the deposit and lending functions of existing deposit banks"; second, "legislation requiring that all institutions which maintain deposit liabilities, and/or provide checking facilities (or any substitute therefor) shall maintain reserves of 100 percent in cash and deposits with the Federal Reserve Banks." (p. 23). The tradition of this condition implies long continued open market purchases of securities by the national monetary authority in order to provide the new cash for the reserves; at the end of the transaction the government would be in "possession of investments amounting to a substantial portion of the federal debt or, perhaps, in possession of the greater part of the debt itself—thus eliminating the burden of the debt, to that extent, without taxation and without inflation." It is later noted that the banks would "accept deposits just as warehouses accept goods", and "their income would be derived exclusively from service charges". As Professor Angell points out in comment on this scheme the saving to the public of interest on a part of the public debt would be offset by the new expense involved in these "service charges". The two sums would roughly balance; but the distribution of the burden of cost over the community would not be expected to meet the criteria of a reasonable system of taxation such as is developed under the third head of the programme. The elimination of the burden of the national debt is not to be expected from this scheme, but that was only a by-product. The scheme

is intended to "define means for eliminating the perverse elasticity of credit which obtains under a system of private, commercial banking, and for restoring (sic) to the central government complete control over the quantity of effective money and its value." One wonders whether nationalization of banking would not be simpler and less 'utopian', and one may also ask whether the monetary programme is essential if the rest of the plan is achieved; competition guarantees flexibility, and it is inflexibility of costs that is given major responsibility for the failure of economic society to adjust itself to monetary disturbances. A similar question arises in connection with his proposals for eliminating excessive salesmanship; surely the problems of advertising and salesmanship are problems of imperfect competition which would disappear when society had been 'atomized'.

THE proposals with reference to taxation (pp. 26-30) deserve careful attention. Those who long for a competitive economy and laissez-faire should notice that Professor Simons does not believe that competitive incomes are 'just', or even necessary as incentives. Those who do not accept the general programme of laissez-faire may still find the taxation attractive. The proposals are "based on the view: (1) that reduction of inequality is per se immensely important; (2) that progressive taxation is both an effective means, and, within the existing framework of institutions, the only effective means to that end; (3) that, in a world of competitive, invidious consumption, the gains at the bottom of the income scale can be realized without significant loss to persons of large incomes so long as their rank in the income scale is unchanged; (4) that drastic reduction of inequality through taxation is attainable without much loss of efficiency in the system and without much impairing the attractiveness of the economic game . . . The proposal here is simply that tax systems be ordered in such a way as to diminish income differences all along the line; that the funds which governments require be obtained through a system of levies which is actually progressive throughout the income scale. Such a policy requires the establishment of personal income tax as the predominant element in our whole fiscal system:" (p. 26). There follow detailed suggestions for a reformed income tax. It is contemplated that something like 10 percent of the whole national income should pass via personal income taxation into the hands of the government. All excise on commodities of wide and general consumption, and the "innumerable miscellaneous levies which have no justification in terms of broad considerations of policy" would be abolished. On the expenditure side, we may look forward confidently to continued augmenting of the 'free income' of the masses in the form of commodities and services made available by government, either without charge or with considerable modification of prevailing price control. It is indeed a liberal policy of laissez-faire that includes the extension of the social services; one may hope that Canadian advocates of economic liberalism will be as liberal.

PLANNING Utopias, imagining voyages to Icaria, is a human characteristic. Naturally the economic theorist who has studied the working of a

theoretical perfectly competitive, perfectly flexible economy, who has observed the fumbling of would-be planners and regulators, and who has listened to the obvious stupidity of the reasons given for engaging simultaneously in actions calculated to have opposite and counteracting effects, is prone to construct his Utopia along the lines of his theoretically conceived competitive economy. Economic theorists with the profound contempt for economic history evinced by some of them are specially prone to this utopianism. It is interesting to note that some economic theorists are apparently beginning to feel more hope of persuading a socialist dictatorship to accept the pricing system as a means of determining a sensible allocation of productive resources between their many possible uses, than of establishing democratic individualism and a competitive economy.

One may well ask, in conclusion, two questions, but answers to them must not be expected. First, is social regulation of an imperfectly competitive and inflexible economy feasible; and second, is 'equilibrium' economic theory of any use in the approach to the problems of regulation? To the first question Professor Simons would answer no, not under democratic government. The more convincing he is, as to the technical difficulty of regulation or as to the desirability of democracy, the more effectively he drives one on to socialism, rather than back to individualism. But regulation seems likely to continue, willy-nilly, and many economists will feel a responsibility for saving governments from some of their stupid errors; others will feel that their talents should be occupied in propaganda for a change in the system and others that all 'meliorist' activities are to be condemned as postponing the inevitable and desirable development of socialism. It can only be stated here as a matter of belief, arising from experience, that a good training in equilibrium economics is a vital part of the equipment of those charged with regulating economic affairs, or with criticizing the regulation. But it is only a part of that equipment: a sound historical background and historical sense are equally important. And a thorough admixture of modesty is perhaps the most important of all. One must remember that it is only problems arising from minor disturbances to an established system that the equilibrium economist can help to solve; major disturbances involve such uncertainty that they call for faith rather than intelligence.



May, 1936.

SHAPED LIKE A BUGLE

Shaped like a bugle
My thoughts, swarming outwards
In phalanx exultant
Singing for these ones:

For you, young lover
Facing the chasm
And plunging head downwards
"I had not the courage".

For you, girl crying
For love has no wisdom
No warm sleep, jobless
No arms to build with—

For you, forerunner
Outstripping darkness
Your mind sharp as sunlight
Piercing our shadows.

For you, sea of faces
Uniform, solemn
Alert for the warning—
Whom hunger outpaces.

Shaped like a bugle
My thoughts split the framework
Of silence and weeping,
Arise, and send singing
This song to the sleeping.

DOROTHY LIVESAY.

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French Canadian Nationalism

QUEBECER

IN a previous article the nature of the French Canadian nationalist movement was considered. It was seen to be an avowedly fascist type, desiring total independence in order to establish a Catholic corporative state on the banks of the St. Lawrence. In this article we shall consider the reasons why the movement arose, why it takes its present form, and what may be done about it.

The roots of the present movement lie deep in the Canadian past. The seeds were sown at the Battle of the Plains of Abraham in 1759—that preliminary skirmish in the centuries-long racial conflict which is slowly being decided against the British in eastern Canada. Since then the French Canadians have maintained themselves, their religion, habits and traditions, against every influence making for their assimilation by the alien culture which surrounds them. Attacks upon them have been of two kinds; overt attempts by the English to suppress their language, their schools and their political liberties, and the cultural corrosion that comes from daily contact with Anglo-Saxon America. The former has been the easier to meet, though the struggle has been long and is not yet over. Lord Durham's belief in the possible extinction of the French Canadian race, a belief which the Union of 1840 was intended to realize, is no longer tenable outside of Orange lodges, though its abandonment is an admission of failure rather than a gesture of generosity. Against the cultural influences, however, French Canada finds it more difficult to fight, but the struggle never ceases to stem the disintegrating effects of the press, the radio, the movies, and of English industrialization.

It is well for the English to understand this struggle, and particularly to realize that the British institutions for which the French Canadian is expected to be so grateful by no means appear to him to be models of fairness and freedom. He knows that in 1760 his civil law was taken from him, to be restored by the Quebec Act of 1774 through fear of revolt in the Americas; he knows of his struggle for political freedom up to 1837, when he was driven to violence to force concessions; he knows that the Act of Union of 1840 took away the official use of his language, and forced him to sit in a legislature where an English minority had equal representation with a French majority; he knows that Manitoba entered Confederation promising equal rights to the French language, and later took them away; he knows that the special protection for his schools in the Manitoba constitution was virtually destroyed by the Privy Council decision in 1892, although the Canadian courts had decided in his favour; he knows that Ontario made a drive against the use of his language in schools by the enactment of Regulation 17 in 1913, and only dropped the attempt in 1927 after a bitter fight; he knows that freedom for his own school system has never been accorded in the Maritimes, in Saskatchewan or Alberta, in a way satisfactory to him. Above all he knows that the British connection has meant and will probably mean again that he will be expected to leave the

peaceful shores of the St. Lawrence and travel to some distant country in which he is not interested, to fight people with whom he has no quarrel, for the sake of an Empire in which he does not believe.

THERE is another side to the picture of course, and every French Canadian knows that also. But the picture here painted is black enough and true enough for the purposes of a nationalist movement. Nor is this all. As the French Canadian looks about his own province today, what does he see? He sees his people ground down under a foreign economic imperialism. English or American capital has a stranglehold over the natural resources of the province, and exploits that wealth, not for the common good, but for the sake of profits to distribute amongst their largely non-French shareholders. He reads the lists of directors of the great corporations whose head offices are in Montreal, and finds hardly a French Canadian amongst them. He is a servant amongst foreign owners; a serf in a new feudalism. He sees his unemployed in Montreal living in misery, too poor to pay for the light and gas which are laid on to their crowded homes, having to cook with coal-oil bought at a price pegged by the oil interests, burning candles for light, and being sent to gaol in batches by the Montreal Light, Heat & Power Company because some of them have enough initiative to jump the meters by tapping the wires and mains. Is it a wonder he becomes aggressive? But for the Church's control he would have rebelled.

Thus it is that two streams of indignation meet today to swell the flood of nationalist sentiment. So long as the purely cultural struggle was uppermost, the movement remained the persistent but moderate influence which it has been since Confederation. Even the Nationalist Party of Mr. Bourassa in 1900 had no secessionist plank in its platform, and was completely democratic in aim; the Abbé Groulx and his associates of Action Francaise were talking of independence in the early 1920's but had no wide following. During the Great Prosperity there was no active nationalist movement. Now, however, the economic crisis has stirred deeper mass feelings than could ever appeal to race or religion, and certain nationalist leaders have been quick to seize their opportunity.

It is in its relation to the economic situation that this new nationalism needs the most careful analysis. The first pinch of the depression did not make the French Canadian more nationalist; it tended to make him socialist. He did not rush to join the Communists or even the C.C.F.; his press is too controlled to enable him to know anything truthful about these movements, and the Church has damned them both. But he did turn instinctively against big business and the trusts generally; there were even murmurings against the wealth of the Church. Criticism of the whole social system, by a genuine proletariat, sprang spontaneously from capitalist decline. Obviously the classes in control had to do something to canalize this revolutionary sentiment,

or else intelligent radicals might capture it. The present talk of independence is in part a deliberately planned attempt to steer social discontent away from socialist thinking. The propaganda of the new journals like *L'Unité*, *La Nation*, *L'Indépendance*, chief organs of the movement, is quite clear on the need for complete autonomy to fight communism and socialism, which they indiscriminately confuse. Are not the western provinces full of Bolshies, and would it not be safer to cut loose from them at once? Thus the new French republic is to be a haven of bourgeois society.

FURTHER parts of the nationalist programme spring directly from the economic realities. To hold the new proletariat, the nationalist leaders must attack the trusts and chain stores as vehemently as do the genuine radicals. Hence the movement today, in contrast to its earlier stages, is filled with the spurious radicalism which is the main weapon of fascist demagoguery. The hungry masses are being told that the trusts are dangerous because they are controlled by English, Americans or Jews; that once an independent corporative state is established it will deal with them effectively, either by putting them in French hands or by destroying them; and that the way out lies in back-to-the-land movements and in a revival of small industry. Whereas the truth of course is that the trusts exploit English, American and Jewish consumers as cheerfully as they exploit everybody else; that to substitute French boards of directors for the present ones would make just exactly no difference at all to the economic system; that a return to a peasant society is a return to the poverty and servility of the eighteenth century; and that the only way out without losing all the efficiency and wealth of large scale production is the creation of a planned, co-operative society based on social ownership of natural resources and monopolies. What these nationalists fail to see also is that one principal reason why French Canadians have seldom advanced to positions of general importance in the economic life of Quebec is not due to the fact that they are constitutionally incapable of adapting themselves to modern industry, nor is it due simply to English unwillingness to give them jobs; it is due in great part to the fact that their schools and colleges, every one of which is in the grip of the Church, are giving them an education that is totally inadequate to the needs of today. It may train them to become good Catholics, but it certainly does not train them to become good engineers, scientists or business men. This is scarcely to be wondered at, when you may read in the *Calendar of the University of Ottawa* that all letters sent or received by the students may be opened and read by the Rector, and in the *Calendar of the Université de Montréal* that the authorities will take special care to prevent the students falling into the three awful errors of "liberalism, materialism and modernism".

Because of its reactionary economic philosophy, however, it follows that the present independence movement will not get very far. For sooner or later the Church is going to understand that it has need of the big corporations and trusts. Much of the wealth of the Church today consists of investments in stocks and bonds. Those investments would be

largely destroyed by an attempt to create an economic unit out of a single province. Independence would therefore cost the Church a great deal in terms of dollars and cents. It was only a few years ago that Mr. Taschereau countered the attack upon the Quebec Power Company, then accused of charging too much for lighting the city of Quebec, by pointing out that amongst its largest shareholders were various ecclesiastical authorities. The Church, indeed, is caught in a dilemma; it must play with the anti-trust sentiment in order to control the nationalist movement and head off communism, but it must also prevent any sudden dislocation of the economic system for fear of losing its investment. Many individual parishes and religious orders are in serious financial difficulty as it is. This dilemma is exactly the sort of situation which produces fascism, for fascism talks socialism before it achieves power, and practices monopoly capitalism afterwards. Quebec will only establish her separate state, as the choice of the lesser evil, if the rest of Canada carries its economic radicalism to extremes so that the Church faces confiscation of its wealth.

IN addition to this financial factor which hampers the secessionist policy, there is also the racial dispersion factor. At one time Quebec and French Canada were synonymous terms. Today French Canadians are scattered throughout the Maritimes, Ontario and the prairie provinces. Quebec can only achieve her independence at the cost of some 650,000 of her children. That also is a price which at the moment seems too great to pay.

What then of the future? What solution is there of this nationalist problem?

In the first place, English Canadians must accept the bi-racial character of this country, with all its implications. If the future of Canada is to be a country where union for national purposes is based on cultural diversity and racial equality, then the English must make further contributions to this ideal than they have yet done. Complete bilingualism in national matters must be accepted; a gradual extension of bilingual rights must be willingly conceded in those parts outside Quebec where French minorities develop; the English schools must teach French more effectively, as a native Canadian language; greater freedom for separate schools will have to be permitted in English provinces. Above all the attitude of the English must harmonize with this national policy; bigotry, smug superiority, must somehow be educated out of them.

In the second place Canadian capitalism, which is controlled by the English and not by the French, must be replaced by social ownership. Strong racial feelings today are in large part due to the failure of the economic system to function. The privately owned trusts and monopolies, besides underpaying workers, exploiting consumers and piling up wealth in the hands of the few, are also doing their best to smash Confederation. They set race against race, class against class, West against East. And they will go on doing this until they are socialized. Socialization will give back to the French Canadian the ownership of his natural resources, for through his provincial government and its various controlling commissions he will be in a position to be master of his economic destiny. He will be able to integrate his provincial planning with the national economic

policy, to the mutual advantage of the province and of the Dominion. But any French socialist party which comes forward must recognize that compensation will have to be paid for all expropriated property unless it is willing to add anti-clericalism to its programme. A policy of confiscation would mean war to the death with the Church; a policy of constitutional socialism, drawing its strength from the masses, co-operating with movements like the C.C.F. outside Quebec, would find a wide support without necessarily becoming committed to a complete overturn of the social structure. After all, Quebec has already got rid of one antiquated social system, when she bought out the rights of the Seigneurs and destroyed the relics of feudalism by law in 1854.

ON their part the French Canadians will have to do a great deal more careful thinking about the economic structure of Canada than they appear to have done. If they really want to try to put back the economic clock, to abolish large industry and to turn all cities into small towns, then there is no solution to the nationalist problem, either before or after the independence of Quebec. This ideal is of course particularly favoured by the present Church authori-

ties, who would undoubtedly have a more obedient and subservient population in such a society. But a feudal Catholicism is not the only nor the best Catholicism. There are plenty of Catholics today who see the possibility of a social order in which large scale industry is socially operated for the benefit of the people, in which the family and home life are sustained by steady and decent wages, and where the efficiency of modern power production is preserved. Such a society is indeed compatible with, if not proclaimed in, the Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*. The trouble is that the Quebec branch of the Catholic Church has become inbred and unprogressive. Its reactionary outlook exceeds the bounds of what the faith requires. Henri Bourassa is reported to have made the remark that "There are two Churches; the Church of Rome and the Church of Quebec, and I belong to the Church of Rome". When enough French Canadians belong to the Church of Rome the nationalist problem can easily be solved within the framework of Confederation, by a joint French and English movement for the building of a co-operative society based on economic planning for the public good, and proud of the richness of its two great cultures.

UPSTART CROWS

G. CAMPBELL McINNES

"Is there no one who will rid me of this pestilent priest?"—Henry II, of Becket, 1170 A.D.

THE truism that art is universal and eternal, and that its value can therefore be assessed against some unvarying and fundamental aesthetic yardstick, is, at times, in need of careful modification. In dealing with the art of specific races or national groups, one finds oneself of necessity shifting balances, making allowances, and, while remembering that in the last resort there can be no confusion between the good and the bad, discarding generalities and compromising with environment and background, of which, after all, art is largely the product.

More especially is this so when one considers the art of the British Dominions and America. For whereas the arts of other lands have evolved with their people from a common soil, the art of these young Anglo-Saxon countries is part of a transplanted culture grafted onto virgin earth. The violent contradictions which characterizes life and art in these places are the inevitable result of the application of modern European standards to what is, in effect, a stone age environment. Hence, to look for a fully developed art in Canada would be as foolish as to speak of Canadian artists as Primitives; for they are heirs to all the European tradition, yet work outside it. To parallel this phenomenon, we may suppose that a large body of Chinese had migrated to Scotland during the early years of the T'ang Dynasty, and had begun in the reign of Alfred the Great to produce an art in which their traditions and their environment were successfully blended.

In either of these cases, the results would be bound to be interesting. Reckoned in terms of T'ang ceramics or Renaissance frescoes neither might be great art; reckoned in terms of their background, they would both have a measure of greatness. Above all, both Canadian art, and this hypothetical Sino-Caledonian art would be significant. But until our T'ang ceramises began to see the essential beauty of mist-wreathed lochs and heather-strewn crags, instead of regarding them as extensions of the paddy-fields of Shantung or the swirl of waters in the flooded Yellow River, there could be no Sino-Caledonian art. And until these heirs to the European tradition began to feel and be influenced by their environment, there could be no Canadian art. That is why the Group of Seven is so important.

With its advent, Canadian art began; and while its birth pangs could not be expected to raise a furore in the outside world, yet for us it is of very great significance, while in a future history of art, it will probably hold a not unworthy place. Despite its many and obvious faults, despite the evil influence which, in many cases, it has had on younger and weaker painters, the Group of Seven performed the immeasurably great service of liberating Canadian painting from the imitative and derivative stage, and making of it a creative art, which reflected the spirit of the country where it dwelt, and of which the possibilities for further development were, and are, enormous. It is on this that its reputation will ultimately rest.

IN a sense, therefore, the disbanding of the Group in 1933, marks the end of a definite period in Canadian art, and it was a happy thought on the part of

DRAWINGS BY LOUIS MUHLSTOCK



STREET
SCENE



THE LAST SUPPER (At a refuge for unemployed)

the National Gallery to arrange at this juncture for its first retrospective showing. Even if evidence of the Group's influence were not ready to hand in the work of most Canadian artists of importance (notable exceptions are David Milne, Paraskeva Clark, John Lyman and Emily Carr) the opportunity which the exhibition afforded of studying 200 canvases left no doubt as to the worth and solidity of the Group's achievement.

Its original members* were drawn together by the common feeling that an indigenous Canadian art could not be produced by seeing the Canadian scene through the eyes of the 19th century Dutch landscapists and the Barbizon school. They were living in a country whose main characteristics were violent alternations of vivid and opposed colors, the interplay of gaunt and powerful masses, and an atmosphere whose essential spirit was aggressively rhythmical. It was a country in which compromise was unknown, a land of sharp contrasts and contradictions, of massive forms, of strong swirling lines and bright hues.

Such a landscape lent itself to a decorative treatment in which flat design was emphasized, and to the color technique of the Impressionists. But in effect, the particular problem presented to the members of the Group by the Canadian scene, was solved in a particular way. Retaining only the rich color combinations which Impressionism had offered, they painted in such a manner as to emphasize both decorative and rhythmic design, the interaction of opposed masses, and the cross-weft of strong lines. The result was a modified form of Post-Impressionism, but with the stress on bold, simple structure, and a spirit thoroughly and sincerely Canadian—the result of a sensitive approach to their own peculiar subject matter.

It was not until the years 1924-27 (when they exhibited in company with other Canadian artists at Wembley, and at the musée du Jeu de Paume in Paris), that the Group began to secure a hearing in their own country. But by the time that their contribution to Canadian art was being fully recognized, many of their disciples had descended into mere imitation. It was partly this that prompted the disbanding of the Group in 1933. Its living members were absorbed into the Canadian Group of painters, and their stature in most cases remains undiminished. With the exception of J. E. H. MacDonald, who died in 1932, they continue to paint, and to guide the painting of others. Varley is head of the art school in Vancouver, Fitzgerald in Winnipeg. Holgate and Carmichael are on the staffs of the Montreal and the Ontario College of Art respectively. Jackson and Casson are painting in Toronto, and Harris in New Hampshire, while Lismer's outstanding work at the Children's Art Centre in Toronto has recently secured him an invitation to visit South Africa and Australia and to put their houses in order.

*—These were, when the Group was formed in 1919, Lawren Harris, A. Y. Jackson, J. E. H. MacDonald, Arthur Lismer, Frank Johnston, Frank Carmichael and F. H. Varley. Johnston shortly afterwards resigned. In 1926, A. J. Casson joined, bringing the number again to seven. MacDonald died in 1932. E. H. Holgate joined in 1931, and L. L. Fitzgerald in 1932.

At its worst, the Group can be showy and violent, and sometimes plastic coherency is strained in an effort to achieve a synthetic unity and boldness of design, while much of its earlier work bears the impress of the stress of discovery, and an inclination to regard color as an adventitious adjunct to form rather than as a part of it. But it has the overwhelming merits of directness and sincerity, a strong sense of rhythm, and an understanding of the essential spirit of the Canadian scene that is past dispute.

Individually, each member of the group makes a personal contribution to their common art. A. Y. Jackson has proved himself a fine colorist, perhaps the most superb craftsman in the Group, and with as honest a sense of paint as one could desire. And however much one may personally deplore Lawren Harris' retirement into the realms of almost abstract design, there is no doubt that at an earlier stage he produced austere and deeply moving work, whose solemn grandeur gave added solidity to a group concerned more with color and the flow of line; and he still remains one of the two outstanding artists in the Group. MacDonald's adherence to Impressionist technique tended to weaken one who had an almost lyrical feeling for the color and beauty and sadness about him, but he remains a painter with claims to genuine greatness; while Varley is in many respects the finest portraitist at work here today.

Fitzgerald is a little off the main path followed by the Group, but none the worse for that. At Ottawa, his exquisitely delicate feathery drawings, and thin wiry canvases were rather swamped by the remainder of the Group with their tendency à peindre épais; but his slow contemplative method is clear and refreshing. Less distinguished, perhaps, are Carmichael and Casson, but the sad and endless peace of the former's landscapes, and the prim, stark farmhouses of the latter are nearly always pleasant. Holgate is the only member to have specialized in figure painting, and his nudes are conceived with authority.

But perhaps in the last analysis, it is Lismer who emerges even above the most gifted of his colleagues. There is little sense of complete achievement in his work; often it lacks finish and is not wholly satisfying. But in the rugged strength of his rocks and wind-bent pines, the heaving earth of his Quebec studies, and the roaring gales that surge across his Georgian Bay canvases, there is a feeling of the struggle for realization that is profoundly exciting. Despite his often slapdash handling of paint, Lismer has a plasticity and an uncanny sense which enables him to transmit to his work the essential unity of earth and sky, their kinship with himself, and with the underlying and perpetual movement of nature.

Not only are these men pioneers, innovators, the founders of a school, possibly the Pisanos to some future Canadian High Renaissance; they are also sincere and gifted painters. It is a formidable combination, entitled no less to our respect than to that of posterity.



THAT LIBERAL FACADE

MARVIN B. GELBER

THE present international crisis occasioned by the dramatic incursion of the armed forces of the Reich into the demilitarized zone, once more finds the democratic nations divided on an effective course of action for preserving the peace of Europe. This time accompanied by Czecho-Slovakia, France and Belgium must still again look to the Russian steam-roller to offset the threats of the greatest potential military power in Europe. English Liberals have failed to free themselves from the slogans that heralded the return of a prostrate Germany to the councils of the new diplomacy. Conservatives do not trust their Eden. And the foreign policy of the United States is still dominated by the unimaginative isolationism of western radicals, expressing the distrust of the frontier for cosmopolitan society. The England of Sir Austen Chamberlain and Winston Churchill knows its enemy when it sees him, but the Londonderry-Neville Chamberlain-MacDonald group have not lost faith in the wisdom of turning German ambitions eastward. Lloyd George wants to render unto Germany that justice which he so effectively denied her in 1918.

The present crisis dramatically exposes the bankruptcy of western liberalism. The historic task of the liberal movement was to emancipate European society from the ghosts of an uncreative past. It was to throw off the shackles of prejudice and to unloose the fatal grip of the tyrannical mort-main. But the partisans of liberal sentiment are today the very ones who are hallowing into a sacred "radical" tradition the hatreds of the past. All the liberal sancta of the post-war era developed in opposition to the Versailles system. The confounding of French ambition was the dream of progressive statesmen. Even Phillip Snowden earned a popular tribute when he brought the giants of the Quai d'Orsay to bay. German "equality" was to provide the cornerstone of the collective system and the ideas of the liberal Republic became the common heritage of enlightened democracy. Up until a few weeks ago the Locarno Treaty, which supplied the basis for the entry of the Reich into the circle of the new diplomacy, was considered a bulwark of continental peace. But liberalism has shown this flexibility, inasmuch as it is now generally agreed in anti-French circles that Locarno was really not quite holy, since it was an inequitable shackle imposed on a prostrate Germany.

IN the four leading democracies of the post-war era, England, France, the United States, and Germany, the liberal groups have been motivated by a certain common, unimaginative psychology. The annihilation of one of those democratic societies and the growing international anarchy, can largely be read in terms of the peculiar, limited stereotypes that have dominated the thinking of liberal statesmen. They have accepted too seriously the ideas of the French Revolution and have failed to take accurate measure of the realities of the social system of the western world. They have displayed a beautiful faith in the doctrine of the inevitability of progress,

while their policies were rendered ineffectual by their own enervating pacifism. Though the price of liberty be eternal vigilance, they were never prepared to pay that price. There are few countries in the world where liberalism has not had the opportunity to ensure progress through building a social democracy. Are there any countries where it has even partially succeeded? At one time the liberals were the revolutionaries and were prepared to go out into the streets to fight for their ideals. Today liberalism is a synonym for temporizing and narrow partisanship. Palliatives are everywhere paraded to lessen the burden of the world's ills, but nowhere has a vigorous, radical programme been skillfully executed. When confronted by unyielding enemies, compromises are accepted as the most expedient policy. Liberalism once unfurled the red flag of liberty, but today it seeks its alliance with the Right cartel. The receding frontier of European democracy has taught but little. The liberal sancta have become the focus of inflexible prejudices. M. Bourbon has joyfully been accepted into membership by the Reform Club.

The Dawes Plan of 1924 commenced the flight from Versailles. The most onerous feature of the Peace was the economic bondage in which Germany was placed in an effort to make her pay for the war. The reparation exactions were twice adjusted and finally abolished at Lausanne five years ago. Britain and France maintained that they were prepared to modify indemnities in conformity with payments on the inter-allied war debts. They refused to assume the burden of transferring abroad large capital sums and thus remain the sole residuary legatees of the obligations for financing the allied cause. The transfer problem remained primarily a question of German-American balance of payments. Between the years 1924-31 Germany borrowed abroad more than twice the amount that was paid on reparation account. Despite American intransigence, there has been a progressive readjustment of these unfortunate obligations. However, the balance of the post-war financial set-up was lost in the economic blizzard of 1929. Despite the unreality of much of the German recovery, with a population of half of that of the United States, she has never experienced in her blackest hour fifty percent of the unemployment of her industrial contemporary.

BUT liberals cannot forget Versailles. In his interesting article in the April issue of the Canadian Forum, Prof. Frank H. Underhill writes, "The law which dominates the European situation at present is an unjust settlement imposed by force in 1919; and it may as well be honestly admitted that the League provides no effective machinery by which that law can be changed through peaceful methods". Oh, Honesty, what things are written in Thy name!

With the flair of a Marxian dialectician for simplified generalization, Mr. Underhill finds "that Europe is divided between the retired burglars and the would-be burglars". He fails, however, to provide a category for a number of small democratic

powers which have been most vociferous in protesting against the undermining of the collective system. Mr. de Valera, for instance, would not thank the liberal don for labelling the Free State as either "retired" or with some unsatisfied susceptibilities for burglary. Scandinavia might find itself greatly embarrassed as a rather square peg in a very academic hole. The list has not been exhausted. While expressing their horror over the economic shackling of the Reich, many enlightened people forget that the Versailles Treaty provided the fairest territorial arrangement that has been bequeathed to continental Europe since the rise of modern states. Outside of the class-room, the principle of self-determination will only be granted universal validity in the land of the Olympians.

Till the accession to power of the minions of Hitler, Germany had always pleaded at the bar of international public opinion against at least one territorial injustice. She had been forced to bring one state to the Council table of the League for mistreating German minorities. Nazi statesmanship has eliminated that blight from the international accounting books—has eliminated it for ten years. For ten years the Polish Corridor will throw no sun spots on the exalted place of the German Reich in the solar system. The cultural fate of a large minority beyond the borders of the Fatherland no longer casts gloom on the Teutonic spirit. Prussia deals with her enemies one at a time.

During the days of the Republic, Czecho-Slovakia was considered a progressive democracy. Minorities there have been as free as the French are in Canada. The friends of Germany admitted all these things, and the exiled Social Democratic Party now maintains its headquarters in that enlightened land. Today liberals are suddenly exercised over the treatment of minorities in the only liberal state in Europe east of the Rhine. Did not Goebbels suddenly discover in 1933 that there were over 3,000,000 starving Germans stranded somewhere in the Ukraine? Even though these much vaunted inequalities have been the creation of the Nazi propaganda machine, the English-speaking world is flooded with liberal apologists who agree that the shackles of Versailles are a just cause for the hysterical expression of the national frustration of the German people. That the subject be a pervert and that the sense of frustration be largely self-induced by unhealthy behaviour is not their concern. The industrial barons of Germany may direct the gaze of the people from the internal ills afflicting their country to Versailles, but liberals prefer to "read their history in a nation's eyes". The problems of unhealthy equilibrium remain.

ANOTHER of the present discontents revolves around the problem of a union of Germany and Austria. Whatever may have been the merits of the question at the time of the proposed customs agreement, the government of Austria is today founded on opposition to the consummation of the plan and the largest of the suppressed parties is violently against it. But liberals must sympathize with the frustration of German ambitions. They regard it as a mistake to have interfered with the consolidation of power by the Central Powers in Eastern Europe in the early years of the century. They will not deny even to the Nazis the hegemony of Europe.

They are prepared to bless Anschluss and help reduce the overhead costs of German fascism. Go East, you Nazi!

Now the main complaint against the point of view of people like Lloyd George, Lord Lothian, the editors of the News-Chronicle, etc., and their North American friends such as Messrs. Underhill, Reid and their disciple Miss Agnes MacPhail, is that they are liberals with a Versailles complex. Prof. Underhill might not see much sense in protesting against the Nazi regime and might be prepared to take it very much for granted. But he will have to find his allies among the Beaverbrooks, Rothermeres and Lady Houstons. If liberalism is not prepared to fight the encroachments of the totalitarian state both at home and abroad, it will vindicate the Marxist claim that it has merely become a facade for reaction. There can be no sense in the cry, "Heil Hitler and make the world safe for democracy!" Mussolini has shown a world all too ready to forget that it is but a mad game to try and make fascists respectable. The peace of Europe cannot be built on futile attempts to satiate the appetite of self-induced frustration.

Mr. Underhill feels that Hitler has upset the European balance "not because he is immoral but because he threatens to be powerful". Russia is also powerful and has become so in the last five years. Even if we do not like the Soviet Union, we must admit that Russia became powerful to defend her new morality. Nazi Germany threatens to be powerful because power is part of her immorality. There is nothing in the logic of history that compels a nation that is not threatened to arm. Conquest is part of the new Teutonic immorality, just as is the smashing of labour unions and the persecution of Jews. Persecution of Jews also takes place within the borders of the Polish Republic. During the last few months eighty Jews were killed in Polish pogroms and four hundred were injured. Over a million are living on the brink of absolute starvation. Yet no one calls for collective action by the League states. Polish pogroms are the work of Nazi agents and merely a reflection of the Nazi immorality. They are not the expression of a menacing, national mentality in the same way that the Nuremberg laws are part and parcel of the anti-social programme of the rulers of present day Germany. Concessions to the Hitlerite regime in the international field have so far led to one great historical result—they have raised the prestige of the new immorality both at home and in the marginal states. The seeds of Mittel-Europa are being sown in Poland and Roumania, which states provide merely a tenuous bulwark for French alliances.

THE anti-French vendetta has been carried to such extremes that important groups of liberals can only resolve the international crisis into a question of burglary. That France rejected Poincaré in 1924 is of no import. That Stresemann considered Locarno the great triumph of his career, that the German Republic looked on the Treaty as the beginning of a new era of international co-operation and that the "spirit of Locarno" was hailed on all sides as the first real expression of the League ideal must all be forgotten. Liberals who insist on confusing the motives of the Front Populaire with those of Poincaré and who refuse to distinguish between the

hand of Hitler and the voice of Stresemann are too embittered by partisan animus to be prepared for liberal action.

It remained for the Communist Litvinoff to proclaim the essential indivisibility of peace. Even "retired burglars" with a reasonable interest in universal harmony might give the world a new morality. The collective system will not be strengthened by encouraging unilateral denunciations of treaties. The peace ballot has shown that the bulk of the English people understand that the basis of European security is no longer to be found on the playing fields of Eton, but rather in the best spirit of the

new diplomacy, in the cultivated gardens of Eden. Hitler marched his troops into the Ruhr to outmaneuver the French, whose ambassador was at that time opening negotiations in Berlin for a review of the grievances of the Reich against her neighbours. By sympathizing with German ambitions the revisionists have weakened the hand of the League and have thus helped to raise the prestige of international anarchy throughout the world. Shielded by liberal apologists, the next chapter of continental history might quite possibly develop into the consummation of Nazi design, "Europe Enters the Third Reich".

BACK TO THE LAND

W. BURTON HURD

WITH urban taxpayers weighed down by government levies and increasing numbers of municipalities reaching the limits not only of their resources but of their credit, it is imperative that every likely avenue of escape from the burden of relief costs be thoroughly explored. Prominent among the suggestions currently receiving consideration is that of subsidized land settlement on a large scale. The objectives of such schemes are highly commendable. The hope is to transfer large numbers of urban families now dependent on relief to the farm, where they could raise at least a portion of their living requirements and might be expected to become self-supporting within a reasonably short time. If assistance has to be provided by the community, and no one questions its obligations in the matter, why not help the unemployed to help themselves, and what simpler solution could be found than putting them on the land? There is no scarcity of good agricultural acreage in this country. A back-to-the-land movement would not only be of immeasurable benefit to the unemployed themselves but would seem to offer some hope—and many think the only hope—of an early reduction of municipal, provincial and federal taxation and expenditure.

It must be admitted that the above argument contains much good sense, yet before committing oneself to any program it is well to consider and weigh the difficulties that are likely to be encountered in putting it into effect. Unfortunately, the more carefully one studies the present proposals the less sanguine one becomes as to their probable effectiveness as a solution for urban unemployment under existing conditions.

In the first place, a back-to-the-land movement involves the reversal of a trend which has prevailed on this continent for a good many years, and at a time when economic conditions are perhaps less favourable to such a reversal than at any period since the turn of the present century. The net population movement has been persistently off the land except on rare occasions like that immediately following the break of the 1929 boom when many discharged employees went back to the parental farmstead for shelter from the storm.

ONE reason for the rural-urban exodus of past years has been the improvement in agricultural technique associated with the use of more and better

machinery and more efficient and scientific farming practices. By these means the output per person actually employed on the farm has been progressively increased until, according to Dr. O. E. Baker, "the average American farmer, in addition to feeding three other persons in his family, provides food and fibres for twelve people living in American cities and for two more persons in foreign countries, a total of eighteen". Science and machinery have enabled us to supply our requirements of farm products—and those of our customers in foreign lands—with a decreasing proportion of our total population, thus releasing increasing numbers for urban employment.

Another factor contributing to the cityward movement has been high birthrates in rural parts. In 1921 there were 603 children under five per 1,000 women of childbearing age in rural Canada as against 374 in urban centres. These figures indicate that the birthrate is about 60 per cent. higher in the country than in the city. Of course both rural and urban birthrates have been declining, but the differential persists and provides a second important explanation of the rural-urban drift.

The magnitude of this drift is not generally realized. During the last inter-censal decade (1921-31) there occurred in Canada a net movement away from rural parts of some 440,000 persons of all ages, over and above gains through immigration from abroad. The net exodus of Canadian born totalled 591,000. This movement took place in a decade when occupied farm land increased by 23,000,000 acres or 16 per cent. and improved land on farms increased by 15,000,000 acres or 21 per cent., and it consisted for the most part of young country-bred men and women whose services were evidently not required on the farm, since farming operations were not only carried on but expanded without them. Failing further expansion in farm acreage, or the development of a more intensive agriculture, for neither of which there appears to be any adequate economic incentive at the present time, and assuming no major interruption in the normal advance of agricultural technique, the potential rural surplus of the current decade cannot fail to be materially in excess of that of the previous ten-year period.

In past years the existence of excess rural population and the consequent rural-urban movement attracted little comment or attention because it was a source of no inconvenience. The internal pressure

was relieved by heavy emigration to the States. Between 1921 and 1931 the estimated net emigration of Canadian-born to foreign countries exceeded 400,000 so that urban Canada was called upon to absorb less than one-third of the net movement of native Canadians off the land. Since 1930 the outlet to the south has been closed and the resultant internal population pressure has tended to dam back at its source the accumulating rural surplus pending the return of more favourable employment conditions in the cities.

AT the same time foreign markets for agricultural exports have been cut off, the prices of farm products have collapsed, and Canadian agriculture has not only been exposed to the full force of the world depression but has been called upon to contribute to the protection of the sheltered secondary industries. It is difficult to see how a back-to-the-land movement under existing conditions of excessive agricultural surpluses and a disproportionately depressed state of the agricultural industry generally could meet with any large measure of success.

To the extent that it succeeded it could not but further impair the position of the existing agricultural community. A recent study revealed that in 1929-30 the Western Canadian farmer found it necessary to sell enough in the world market to purchase two-thirds of his living necessities; he was able to furnish directly from the farm only one-third of the total expenditure on the needs of his family. Substantially the same conditions obtain in the East generally with the obvious difference that a much larger proportion of the farmer's output is sold on the domestic urban market rather than abroad. An expansion of farming of a type hitherto found most successful in Canada would therefore merely add to existing agricultural surpluses, further depress prices, and increase the pressure on the excess farm population to move into the cities and compete for such urban employment as is offered.

Of course it may be argued that the purpose of the current land settlement scheme is merely to enable the urban unemployed to produce his own requirements on the farm. One questions whether even an approximation to a self-contained agricultural economy could be achieved in Canada today, even if any large number of the urban unemployed could be induced to live under the conditions that it would demand. The proposal in this form is simply to set up a peasant agriculture side by side with modern commercialized farming. Peasant agriculture is admittedly inefficient and has long since been discarded on this continent. Even if one admits that some might temporarily prefer this alternative to remaining on urban relief, it is inconceivable that any considerable portion of the urban unemployed would be willing to accept permanently the primitive living conditions imposed, while neighbouring farmers and workers in nearby towns and cities enjoyed the comforts and conveniences of a modern industrial society. They would flock back into the cities as soon as employment conditions showed any signs of material improvement. In a country like Canada where people are free to move about, a peasant agriculture cannot be counted upon as a permanent part of our economic organization unless the equivalent of peasant conditions obtains among urban workers.

THE initiation of either type of land settlement could not but prove costly. If the plan is to give the urban settler a chance to make a permanent success on the land, one must recognize the fact that the type of farming that has been found most successful on this continent involves moderately large scale operations. To equip properly any large number of new farms for prospective urban residents would call for a not inconsiderable financial outlay, while the use of abandoned farmsteads would be putting at their disposal land and equipment that had already proved incapable of economic operation. In any case the possibility of new settlers being able to earn a living, pay their taxes and repay capital and operating loans under the existing state of agricultural prosperity would seem quite remote. Even to establish any substantial number on small, poorly equipped farms would involve heavy capital expenditure in addition to operating subsidies; and if this policy were followed there would be the economic certainty that little or none of either class of outlays would ever be recoverable.

The conclusion, therefore, seems to be that an extensive program of settling the urban unemployed on the land would be inopportune at the present time. This does not preclude the practicability of assisting a limited number of carefully selected families to become re-established on the farm, nor the converting of conveniently situated vacant land into garden plots for the use of persons out of work; but any large movement back to the land, even if it could be financed and carried out in such a way as to enlist the support of the urban unemployed, could hardly fail to induce a contrary cityward movement which would defeat the purpose for which it was instituted. The present depression cannot be attributed to any lack of expansion of our agricultural acreage; and until markets and prices permit the economic use of existing capacity and the agricultural industry as a whole regains a measure of prosperity comparable to that in urban Canada, any substantial attempt to relieve the urban unemployment situation by putting more people on the land promises to prove costly and relatively ineffective.

INTER ALIA

Please ponder the Jap,

Expressionless map; what's he up to, this chap?

Having fun with the hun, tossing sops to the wops,
Or a bun?

Well, maybe; perhaps—

These Japs!

Just glance at the Yank,

So childishly frank, like a point that is blank;

Such power to devour, like a horse trying force

On a flower.

And also such cranks,

These Yanks!

Cast your eye on the Brit,

He seems pretty fit, but so stuffed—that's just it.

His head hasn't spread, but his figger gets bigger,

Instead.

Will they still keep their wits,

These Brits?

ALT'REGO.

St. Francis of Antigonish

J. KING GORDON

PERHAPS it is the wind from off the Gulf and from the Straits beyond that brings realism into their thinking. Perhaps it is that they are fishermen and farmers and miners fighting always nature's parsimony and man's greed. Perhaps it is their Celtic blood and the rebellious independent traditions of race. For whatever reason, when the men of Antigonish and Cape Breton think, they act.

It is especially interesting to listen to people talk about democracy in these days and on this continent, when they talk about it not in the bitter tones of disillusionment nor with that sentimental wistfulness which in a time of crisis summons to its aid those "ideals" upon which our trembling civilization is founded, but as if it were a reality. When they put their words on paper they write about "The Technique of Democracy". Dr. James Tompkins, Parish Priest at Reserve Mines in Cape Breton, puts the case in his customary forthright manner: "If we are to build a real democracy, our most serious attention will have to be given to the foundation. We must build from the bottom up and not from the top down. We must, in other words, build on the foundation of the average common man". And so that no cheerer or fearer of dictators can make any mistake: "We are not looking primarily for leaders. What we want is a people. No body of men is worthy of a socially just society unless it is able to merit it by its intelligence and its moral backbone. If they got it otherwise they would not appreciate it or long maintain it."

For Father James Tompkins is telling about the way in which he has seen democracy being built in the eastern Maritimes.

The people of the seven most easterly counties of Nova Scotia are largely highland Scots. Even today many communities are Gaelic speaking. Those who are not Scots are Irish; except that in the mining and steel areas there is a more mixed industrial population. The eastern counties are almost solidly Catholic. In Antigonish and Pictou counties the Catholic and Protestant groups are fairly evenly divided. Let it be said that between the two religious groups there is a genuine spirit of good will and mutual understanding.

ALL the factors, economic and social, racial and religious, play their part in the spectacular transformation which Dr. Tompkins refers to as "building democracy". For many years, in fact almost since Confederation, the economic plight of the Maritimes has provided a painful topic in political discussion. With a provincial consciousness and a racial solidarity hardly to be paralleled anywhere on the continent, the people of the Maritimes, year in and year out, have nursed their grudges against the "central powers", economic and political. Some redress from the Federal authorities seemed to be essential if the Maritimes were to be rehabilitated, but while the Federal administrations, Liberal and Conservative, have expressed their warmest devotion to the cause of "the rights of the Maritimes" little redress has actually been forthcoming. Meanwhile,

in the rural and seaboard districts, economic decline had been reflected in a deepening fatalism in the acceptance of things as they are. Only in the mining areas were to be found signs of an aggressive discontent. There, sporadic bursts of militancy registered protest sometimes effective, more often ineffective, against the increasing pressure upon the standard of living, a pressure dictated partly by past mismanagement, partly by present market conditions and the insistent claims that property rights take priority over the lives of men.

For many years the devoted labours of teachers, agricultural experts, priests and ministers led to bitter disappointments and a growing sense of futility. For ever-present was the economic problem, the feeling of impotence in the face of a situation beyond individual or community control. In the past there had been some prosperity in the fishing villages and rural areas. Now conditions were changed and it was impossible to cope with them. There were individuals among the clergy who recognized that the cure of souls had to extend far beyond the ministrations to spiritual needs in the narrowly accepted sense. There were men of vision, MacDonalds and MacPhersons and Tompkins, who led their people in a struggle against economic odds. There were rural conferences with leadership provided by professors from St. Francis Xavier University and the provincial Department of Agriculture. There were the beginnings of experimentation in improved methods of soil culture, of stock raising, of co-operative marketing and buying. There were even the beginnings of a program of adult education. And then St. Francis Xavier University launched out boldly into the new venture of the Extension Department.

IT was in 1928 that it was decided to conduct a survey of the seven eastern counties in order to discover what precisely were the educational and economic needs of the people and to devise a scheme of adult education which best would meet those needs. Dr. Coady and Professor A. B. MacDonald were appointed to conduct this survey. In addition to the Maritimes' survey, they carried out investigations into adult education work and university extension programs in various parts of this continent. But perhaps the most important avenues of investigation led them to Denmark and other Scandinavian countries where the Folk School Movement had become a focus of world attention. The outcome of all this preliminary survey and investigation was the Extension Department of St. Francis Xavier.

There are three cardinal points of faith in the program of the Extension Department.

First: Adults have a capacity for education in the same sense that children have a capacity for education. As Dr. Tompkins writes: "We did not discover until very recently that 'age in itself is a minor factor in either success or failure, that capacity, interest, energy and time are the essentials, that adult education suffers no mythical handicap because of the age of the student'. The old saying, 'Childhood is the time for learning' is replaced by the new slo-

gan, "The time for learning anything is the time when you need it."

Second: Without education, social action or organization will gain no permanent results. The Extension Department goes a step farther and affirms that out of an adequate program of adult education new forms of social and economic organization will rise almost spontaneously. They quote the case of Denmark and Sweden.

Third: The movement must be a "people's movement". The Extension Department stands ready to provide material for study, information, guidance, but the real leadership is in the movement itself. The movement is of the people. Here perhaps is the source of its greatest strength. It is not an importation, it does not contain a new doctrine foreign to the experience of Cape Breton farmers and fishermen and miners. It is a movement which has arisen out of a reinterpretation of the common experience of the people and has issued forth into enterprises for the reconstruction of their economic, social and cultural life. The greatness of the leaders of St. F. X. may be estimated by their ability to inspire a people's movement with their zeal and organizing capacity without assuming the dominant roles that normally would be theirs.

THERE are now between nine hundred and one thousand active study clubs in Cape Breton and the counties of Pictou and Antigonish. During the last few months word has come in to the Extension Department headquarters that clubs have begun in Prince Edward Island and in New Brunswick. The clubs have a wide range in size of membership. But large clubs are discouraged. The clubs hold regular meetings in homes although sometimes special meetings are held in school house or community hall. When a debate is held the largest hall in the community is secured and packed to overflowing.

All the clubs have access to the circulating library of the Extension Department. Requests for books come in by the dozen in every morning's mail. Here is one list which I happened to see:

- "Co-operation in Denmark".
- "Co-operative Democracy".
- "Soviet Challenge to America".
- "Co-operative Movement in Great Britain".
- "Capitalism, Co-operation, Communism".
- "What everybody wants to know about Money".
- "The Unseen Assassins".

In the Economics section there are books by Stuart Chase, G. H. D. Cole, J. M. Keynes, Sir Arthur Salter, George Counts, John Strachey. Under Education are listed works by Kilpatrick, Thorndyke, Counts and Dewey. The field of international relations is covered by the most up-to-date books. The Soviet Union is described by such writers as Hindus, Calvin Hoover, Sherwood Eddy, Counts, Chamberlin and Emile Burns. Then there is a complete library on the co-operative movement and the latest writings on rural sociology and scientific agriculture. A special section on handicrafts and the preparation of debates and plays is designed to assist the clubs in broadening the field of their activity.

In addition to the library the Department provides useful material in pamphlet and mimeographed form. Fortnightly bulletins containing articles and information on the general economic situation and on special local problems are sent out to all the

clubs. A generous use is made of the scissors, and digests and book reviews are reproduced in the Bulletin or in mimeographed sheet. Hot from the press of the nation and the continent the news is relayed on to the remotest fishing village. The people of Cape Breton become aware that the world moves on.

"Out of education, co-operation". The adult education program is directed towards the objective of raising the whole cultural standard of the people of the Maritimes. Education, if effective, will result in the re-ordering of institutions and relationships to provide a basis of satisfactory living for the individual and the community. The adult education, as carried out in the study clubs, has led first to the breaking down of that mental inertia that for years has kept the people in economic and spiritual bondage. "We can learn, we can understand our world, we can see the nature of our problems, we can solve our problems". No longer do club members accept the individualistic approach to immediate problems, an approach which divides the community into a number of actual or potential competitors. They come to appreciate the validity of the co-operative and ethical approach and endeavour to act together in the intelligent direction of their social life.

What happened in the little town of Canso is typical. Dr. James Tompkins arrived as parish priest of Canso. It is said the good people of St. F. X. found this brilliant little man too radical in certain of his ideas for the university where he was professor. That was many years ago. Canso was in an unhappy state. The fishermen were miserably poor, culturally backward, their families suffering from actual want and undernourishment. James Tompkins visited a fisherman one night. To his surprise he found books in the fisherman's home. They began talking about books and the consequence was that the fisherman borrowed a volume from Dr. Tompkins' library. I think it was Stuart Chase's "The Tragedy of Waste". That was the beginning of a study club. For the fisherman had friends who became interested in the subject matter of the book and wanted a chance to read and to discuss. For some the first problem was learning to read. The club carried on enthusiastically through the winter and in the springtime the talk of the village turned to the prospects of the fishing season. The outlook was not bright, for each fisherman had to make his contract with the fishing company who supplied him with equipment and it was known that the price paid for the catch would be small. They had been studying about co-operation and the daring idea presented itself, "Why not pool our catch, take it down to Boston and sell it for ourselves? Why continue to be exploited by a company that after all has no concern in the wellbeing of our community but only in the profits they can make out of our labours?" The experiment proved a success. The next step was the discussion of a co-operative cannery, comparatively easy to set up and operate if there was a united will in the group. The cannery was organized and functioned successfully. Other activities followed. A buying club, a co-operative store, a credit union. The whole economic position of the little town improved. But, what is more important, in the process a new community emerged.

OR take the case of the development of the credit unions in the mining areas. Here we have an

example of an education project directly sponsored by the Extension Department. The importance of personality cannot, of course, be overestimated. In this case the key man was the Field Secretary of the Department, formerly active in the militant labour movement, who had suffered for his tireless efforts in the struggle to improve the conditions of his fellow workers and who was highly respected by all. Even before the Extension Department appointed him their official representative he had organized a number of study clubs. His appointment resulted simply in the intensification of his educational activity. Today there are about 150 study clubs in the mining area with three excellent circulating libraries. The consumer's co-operative movement which has been long established in Glace Bay, North Sydney and New Waterford has received new impetus and a greatly increased membership from the clubs. But probably the most significant development has been the setting up of a number of credit unions which, during last year loaned to their members more than \$100,000. Each union has a building or room of its own, equipped or built by the members. They are run by the miners themselves who elect officials, manager, cashier, bookkeepers, credit committee. The records of these unions tell a story of

complete efficiency in operation and management. But they tell the much more significant story of a new sense of security and growing confidence on the part of the community in its ability to control a section of its economic life.

Out of the nine hundred or a thousand clubs possibly three hundred are organized among the women. Sister Marie Michael of the Extension Department is in charge. The general backwardness of the eastern Maritimes has been reflected in the lack of knowledge of the fundamental principles of health, of hygiene and of diet. The economic improvement brought about by the educational work and co-operative ventures is apt to be wasted unless there is a wide extension of knowledge in these fields. Here the women's clubs are doing effective work. The economy of the home is being reorganized. Moreover, as you talk to Sister Marie Michael you discover that for her there is vastly more in the program than simply economic or social improvement. It represents a road into the richer realms of human experience, a way to cultural and spiritual maturity for so long denied.

Miracles are being wrought in Nova Scotia. The other St. Francis seems to walk again and on Canadian soil. But he talks with a Gaelic accent.

SOMERSET MAUGHAM

L. A. MacKAY

THE work of Somerset Maugham is remarkable in modern fiction for its singular purity. This may sound like a provocative and paradoxical statement, but it is not so meant. Confine the word "purity" to its technical sense, and it is a statement of obvious fact, but the suspicion of paradox is sufficient witness to the singularity of the quality. To aim at nothing else than telling a straightforward entertaining story is uncommon among good novelists; to ask for nothing else is even less common among critics. Most of our critical terms consciously twist into a reference to some controversial attitude towards this or that social, political, or psychological dogma.

In the preface to *Cosmopolitans** a collection of short stories written to appear complete on opposite pages of the *Cosmopolitan Magazine*, Maugham sums up the creed that has issued in this purity. "The novel may stimulate you to think. It may satisfy your aesthetic sense. It may arouse your moral emotions. But if it does not entertain you it is a bad novel. It is merely laziness that induces people to go to novels for instruction on subjects that are the province of experts. There is no short road to knowledge and you will only waste your time if you seek it in a work of fiction. If you are interested in psychology you had much better read a book on the subject. If you are interested in sociology you had much better go to a sociologist. The technical devices that an author uses to capture your interest are his own affair. Such a one as the "stream of

thought" is an amusing trick, but it is of no more real importance than the epistolary style which was in vogue during the eighteenth century. Like that, it is an ingenious expedient to give verisimilitude. To suppose that it can have a scientific value, as some critics have done, is ridiculous. The novelist deals with individual cases which he has chosen to suit his purpose. They may exemplify a rule; they cannot serve to formulate one. The novelist gives you his private view of the universe. He offers you intelligent entertainment; and the first thing you should ask of an entertainment is that it should entertain."

This cordial acceptance of a clear limit is the distinguishing mark of Maugham's work. He attempts, more consistently and more successfully than George Moore, to make himself a perfectly transparent medium for the presentation of his story. Avoidance of mannerism is almost a mannerism with him, yet few men have displayed such marked unity from earlier to later works. The essentials of the technique are the same, the style is the same, though increasingly careful and correspondingly easier, the attitude of the narrator is the same; and this unity is all the more remarkable when we compare the long stories of the earlier volumes with the necessarily restricted subjects of the short anecdotes that make up this book.

THIS assumption of impartiality leaves a writer more free in his choice of subjects. Even though, like Maugham, he choose to confine himself to a comparatively narrow geographical range, his emotional range is not limited by any necessity of

**Cosmopolitans*: Somerset Maugham; Doubleday Doran; pp. 272. \$2.50.

demonstrating this or that. He may take virtually the same situation and present it with equal effect from two or three different angles. All he asks is that it make an effective story. The narrator so often found in Maugham's stories is perhaps the most colorless of all narrators; he is a state of suspended judgment made vocal. Even when he passes judgment on an action or a character, he has no more personality than the chorus of a Greek tragedy; he speaks with the inhuman and unquestionable arrogance of Aristotle's 'wise man', the normal human reason throned on the normal human emotions. If the narrator were less shadowy he would be insufferable; but he is not a person, he is a sidelight, or a spotlight.

There is a wide-spread assumption, the regrettable but not unnatural product of human impatience, that reason and emotion are mutually destructive, and since art is the province of emotion, reason in art must bark only when she's bid. But in Maugham's work, reason rules the roost, and emotion runs riot on a leash, like Cerberus at the heels of Hercules. Emotion at its purest, emotion unrestrained, may well be destructive of reason; but reason at its purest is not necessarily destructive of emotion. For unrestrained reason is not reason at its purest, it is reason gone unreasonable. It is the abdication of reason in favor of its own shadow, reason covertly transformed into emotion. Reasonable reason, which knows its own limits as well as those of other things, does not destroy emotion, but intensifies it, presenting it in a form where it issues not in immediate unreflective action, as pure emotion must unless restrained by superior force, but in understanding and appreciation.

THIS is nowhere better shown than in the most characteristic of Maugham's work. The most poignant passages are precisely those where he says, in effect, "That is true; but this also is true, and must not be forgotten", where, for example, after having made you loathe and despise a man, with five words he makes you pity him as well. His characters interest him, and are expected to interest his readers, primarily as objects of contemplation, to be contemplated indeed with the feelings humanly appropriate to their nature and actions, but for the sake of enjoying the contemplation, not of experiencing these feelings, and certainly not with the intention of doing anything about such people.

The style in all his later works, but most markedly in this, has become simpler, more intimate, more fastidious. One has the impression of listening to an even, restrained, pleasingly modulated voice, choosing and weighing its words with a deliberate appreciation of their full significance. This at its best can be singularly effective. The bare statement that so-and-so is a good, or a bad, man or woman, can be made to mean far more than a dozen wild and whirling adjectives. It is the essentially and distinctly civilized style, but the most precarious of all to write. Its transparency is merciless when a man is saying nothing particularly worth saying; it can easily become thin and savourless, and this danger Maugham does not always avoid. But at its worst it is inoffensive; and at its best it has an ease and rapidity that make it unsurpassed for presenting a reasonable man's pictures of generally unreasonable people.

THE HARP

Say not 'I am a harp whereon you play
Your wilful music', rather let me say
'I am the harp's wood, pressure-shaped and bent,
But voiceless till your passionate strings have lent
Their music. I am the shaggy bull's head, dumb,
From out whose hollow throat no echoes come
Until your smitten strings give forth the high
Compelling note of Midir's shattering cry'.

Upon this harp no mortal master plays,
Its strings are swept by one of ancient days,
Etain's immortal lover. None may know
That far strange melody of long ago
Save those twice-born, re-entrant to the womb
Of the great Mother, risen from the tomb
Of the world's customary ways, made free
Of earth and sky, akin to bird and tree,
Living the re-incarnate life of ecstasy.

A mist of music fills the air, small flowers
Sparkle underfoot, a silver bee-tree towers,
Crowned with its canopy of living fire;
The umber plough and meadow green retire
To a dim breath of unimagined blue
Where burnished clouds their stately course pursue.

Now fails the wing of song; no more the hand
Of Midir sweeps the strings; the feathered band
Fall silent, save for the owl's mysterious call.
Low in the vale beneath, the murmurous fall
Of water weaves a subtle spell of sleep.
Here where the beech-tree casts its shadow deep,
Hid in a lair of bracken let us lie,
While the harp's plangent tones around us die,
Tasting on earth the immortality
Of the undying children of the Sidhe.

Crumbles the harp, still shall the song
Roll endlessly, victorious, strong
To slay the slayer, vanquish Time
With magic of immortal rhyme.

MERLIN.

UNUTTERABLE

Not all the words that ever poet wrote,
Nor the melodious note
Of all sweet instruments of wind and string,
Mingled with voices of young boys that sing,
Have power to tell this that I see and hear and feel,
The while my overcharged senses reel,
And my frail mortal vessel is filled
With unimagined sweetness slow distilled —
This timeless, sublimate essence of all joy
Use cannot cloy.

MERLIN.

BOOKS



The Webbs on Russia

SOVIET COMMUNISM: A NEW CIVILIZATION:
Sidney and Beatrice Webb; New York, Scribners;
pp. 1174.

THE chief event in the recent history of the British Labour Party was the publication last year of the Webbs' great work on Soviet Communism, which has already achieved the position of a classic in England. The authors declare in their preface: 'the first step to any competent understanding of what is happening in the U.S.S.R. is that the picture should be viewed as a whole'. So they have attempted to present a comprehensive survey and analysis of the whole complicated working of Russian communist society. They bring to this task a lifetime's experience in social study and especially in the discussion of socialist policies and principles. Their book is based upon personal study on the spot and also upon an apparently exhaustive reading of everything that American, British, German, and French investigators have written about Russia. They have thus produced the most comprehensive and scientific study of the subject.

As English Fabians, steeped in the traditions of Western European liberalism, lifelong exponents of 'the inevitability of gradualness', the Webbs would necessarily start with a bias against the methods of violence and coercion which have marked the history of the Soviet regime. All the more significant, therefore, is their conclusion that it is in a real sense a new civilization which is being built up in the Soviet Union, that it will endure there and that it will spread to other parts of the world. The main principles of this new civilization—the abandonment of the profit incentive, the liquidation of the capitalist and landlord, the system of planned production for community consumption—are now familiar enough in outline to everyone. What this book does is to remove the discussion of these principles from the realm of either invective or logic-chopping, and to show them actually at work over one sixth of the world's surface, keeping in view the difficulties and problems of the new society, the trends for the future.

The two features in this new communist society which are emphasized throughout are universality and multiformity. At every point in their investigation the authors were struck by the manifest determination to make all new benefits and opportunities available to everybody. Stalin's devotion to national rights within the Union has enabled all the racial minorities to take advantage of the new literacy and education, the new health services, as well as the new tractors and collective farms. Even more striking to the Webbs was the multiformity of the social structure. Their analysis of the complex pyramids of soviets, trade unions, organizations of

owner-producers and consumers' co-operatives, brings out the extraordinary variety of methods by which individual men and women earn their living and participate in the making of group decisions. There are 15 central trade unions in the U.S.S.R., with a membership of 18 million, playing their part in the conduct of industry through a process of collective bargaining which is far more widespread than in Great Britain, and also administering many of the social services; there are 20,000 co-operative societies of owner-producers in urban industry and 240,000 collective farms, not to speak of smaller organizations in fishing and other pursuits.

One great contribution the Webbs' book makes is to prove the inadequacy of so much of the familiar controversy going on in Western countries about the Russian experiment. They compel us to revise our old categories—dictatorship versus democracy, regimentation versus individualism, etc. They show how every major decision of policy is 'rooted in an almost inconceivable amount of public discussion'. While admitting to the full the ruthless character of many of the achievements of the soviet leaders, they show also that 'such a transformation of society as they aim at in one generation is not within the capacity of a mere dictatorship, and demands the active participation of millions of instructors'. Their explanation of how planning actually works is especially valuable on this point. They undermine the whole position of those over-acute scholastic economists who are so fond of proving the incompatibility of a planned society with that precious 'freedom' of consumers to which we have become accustomed under capitalism.

The secret of this 'multiform democracy' the Webbs discover in the 'Vocation of Leadership', i.e., in the functions of initiative, guidance and control performed by the Communist Party. With its carefully selected and trained membership it gives this leadership 'not merely at the centre or from the heights, but ubiquitously in the factory or on the farms, no less than in election meetings'. More than one-half of its members remain manual workers. In every factory, on every farm, on every council or committee, there is a small nucleus of party members, giving a lead by 'persistent and personal example'. 'The term dictatorship is surely a misnomer for this untiring corporate inspiration, evocation and formulation of a General Will among so large a population'. It is the directing force of this organized group of leaders which supplies the unifying factor in the complex society of the Soviet Union.

But to anyone who knows something of the previous writings of Sidney and Beatrice Webb the most interesting feature of this great work is the persistent note of exultation at the triumph of some of

their old Fabian principles. Certainly the colossal upheaval and transformation which is taking place in the U.S.S.R. seems on the surface to have little in common with the modest programme of the Fabian Essays of 1889. Yet what impresses these Fabian essayists most in the Russia of 1935 is the application of the methods of science to the solution of social problems. The Fabians of the 1880's believed that they were only bringing up to date and applying to the society of their day the rationalist principles of Bentham and his school of the early nineteenth century. And now in the U.S.S.R. they observe and welcome the carrying out with logical thoroughness of all the Benthamite principles: the greatest happiness of the greatest number, everyone to count for one and no one to count for more than one, government by skilled administrative experts on a foundation of complete political democracy. The common accusation that was always made against the Fabian brand of socialism was that it would mean a scientific bureaucratic tyranny, and the Webbs were never quite able to answer this satisfactorily by argument. But now they find the answer being worked out in practice in Russia, where deliberate planning from the centre covers a far wider range—economic, social and intellectual—than anything they could have conceived of, and yet where millions make the plan.

They had always criticized the syndicalist vision of a social order based on the self-governing workshop. And now they find a concrete example of their ideas in Russia, where the experiment of workers' control has been given up. 'If consumers' needs are to decide the producers' work there must be—where the guidance of profit-making in the free market is abandoned—some organization, outside the factory, outside the trade union, outside the industry itself, by which the representatives of the whole community of citizen consumers can instruct each factory what it is to produce'. Finally they see in the U.S.S.R. the application on a large scale of the technique of measurement and publicity by which they believe that objective norms may be established for the testing of the achievement of individuals and of groups. Hence their book is the Fabian Nunc Dimittis.

FRANK H. UNDERHILL.

Half Way House

THE GENERAL THEORY OF EMPLOYMENT, INTEREST AND MONEY: J. M. Keynes; Macmillan; \$1.50; pp. 403.

KEYNES is the most unorthodox of orthodox economists. He here presents an exhaustive equilibrium analysis of employment, output, wages and interest, but also declares himself in favour of the usury laws of the Middle Ages, the economic views of the Church Fathers, the monetary and balance of trade ideas of the Mercantilists, the theory of Gesell (who has usually been regarded as a monetary crank) that the rate of interest is one of the chief evils of capitalism, the belief of Major Douglas that the habit of corporations of setting up large reserves for depreciation was an important cause of the slump in the U.S.A.,—in favour of rigid wages and therefore rigid prices instead of flexible ones, and, finally,

of state control of investment in order to reduce the interest rate to zero; this last proposal, he believes, would abolish poverty, unemployment and most of the inequality of wealth and income.

With some irony he extols pyramid buildings, the singing of dirges for the wealthy dead, gold mining and the modern millionaire's mansion as preferable to the only alternative under laissez-faire: depression and war. It is Keynes' view that a laissez-faire economy is by its fundamental nature such that, even if by a miracle everyone were employed and capital equipment was abundant, nevertheless the normal working of saving, investment and consumption in the system is such that losses would be made, men would be laid off, equipment allowed to rust, until the community was so poor that saving was zero. This conclusion is based on an argument so difficult and involved that few laymen can be expected to follow it, despite the many patches of brilliant and amusing writing. Classical economists are vigorously criticized, especially Marshall, Pigou and—Keynes. With the technical argument there is ample room for objections, but there are sections which will repay reading by everyone. Keynes points out the folly of expecting a market like Wall Street to allocate resources properly on the basis of future returns, since in fact the participants in Wall Street are engaged not in estimating future returns but in guessing the average speculator's estimate of the value of business in the near future. And what the average investor thinks about is short time values.

The last chapter dealing with the social philosophy behind the theory seems to have been overlooked by most socialists. It is true that Keynes now has less faith than before in the efficacy of monetary measures to make capitalism work, that he is, with qualifications, for a more equal distribution of income and wealth through taxation, and that he believes the state must assume the control of investments. But he believes that with this reform and possibly state control of monopolies, the free enterprise system ought to be left intact. He hopes his scheme would eliminate unemployment and he believes that driving the rate of interest down to almost zero would result in a tremendous multiplication of equipment within a generation, at the same time eliminating the rentier class.

Aside from the question as to whether a positive rate of interest is the main factor in keeping us poor, it is worth pointing out that Keynes' vagueness about state control of investment has saved him from showing that under it anything of laissez-faire is left. If the state were to control the purchases of a firm, it must supervise most of its functions too. This book, strangely enough, seems to overlook the ubiquity of monopoly, and the solution suffers at every turn from this neglect. Finally it is naive to assume that the rentier class will sit by peaceably while the euthanasia is accomplished.

VIRGINIUS COE.



The Rule of Law?

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS AND THE RULE OF LAW 1918-1935: Sir Alfred Zimmern; Macmillan and Co.; pp 527. \$3.75.

ONE wonders how much irony Sir Alfred Zimmern intended when he gave his new book its title. Probably none. But there is a good deal there nevertheless, for this is an account of the creation and management of a League by democratic statesmen, chiefly English and French speaking, who have steadily refused to uphold and are now at least only half-heartedly trying to retrieve that very Rule of Law on which the League system must rest. But to give him his due, Sir Alfred is not here offering a moral thesis or even propounding the rather precarious international ethical classification which we might have expected from him. He offers instead what is, without the usual exaggeration, a brilliant and beautifully lucid piece of history politics. From start to finish the volume is a delight to the mind and the ear, for it is deft and crisp, and smoothly free of the superfluous.

Part I surveys "The Pre-War System", with a brief but satisfying X-ray of "Diplomacy" as Chapter No. I. "Diplomacy is not enough", says Sir Alfred, because (a) it is the survival of the spirit of caste: (b) a diplomat is not a specialist but rather, as Sir Ernest Satow prescribed, a man of "good temper, good health and good looks" with "rather more than average intelligence": but for him science is "not necessary", geography is "not of great value" and there is no reference whatever to economics: (c) the diplomat is "almost inevitably non-co-operative in temper and outlook", and finally as the most serious criticism of diplomacy is (d) the connection between it and war, "or, to be more precise, the use of the threat of war by diplomats as the crowning argument in a political discussion".

Part II describes "The Elements of the Covenant", and Part III, "The Working of the League". The author concludes that the new international system has broken down because of "the absence of any real sense of social solidarity between the leading peoples of the world", and, for example in the Manchurian dispute, gives fairly clear evidence of how this absence of understanding or confidence rendered completely useless even the negotiating facilities of the trans-Atlantic telephone. But it is in creating this essential confidence that he sees real and abiding place for the League machinery.

Sir Alfred has not attempted too much in this book. He is dealing with the means of co-operation between states—not peoples or nations—offered by the League, and it should be difficult to find a more readable and substantial treatment than this. The narrowness of the field chosen is apt to provoke criticism, but not for its aridity. Sir Alfred Zimmern is an old denizen of Geneva, and it is from an intimate knowledge of its peculiar atmosphere that he writes. If his book needed a sub-title it might easily be "Psycho-Analysis of Geneva".

To conclude a notice which can do little but commend the book, one might add a plaintive protest against the reiteration on the last page of that silly description of the British Commonwealth as a "smaller League". This is suitable for speakers but

hardly for thinkers. One function alone of the League of Nations, as laid down by Sir Alfred, would be enough to expose the analogy. That function is to help its member states to discover "sensible" ways of dealing with their own affairs.

T. W. L. MacDERMOT.

The Prairies

AGRICULTURAL PROGRESS ON THE PRAIRIE FRONTIER: R. W. Murchie assisted by William Allen, J. F. Booth and others; Macmillan; \$4.50; pp. xii, 344.

THIS volume was originally planned as an attempt to answer the questions: under what conditions did western farming pay its way prior to the depression? of what use is government control? As a first step in providing the answers, field surveys by the questionnaire method were made in nine separate farming districts of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta in the summers of 1930 and 1931. Life histories of the farmers and their farms were compiled for each district, together with detailed statements of income, expense and indebtedness for the year of the survey. The results provide a valuable datum line for estimating the position of western agriculture at the end of a long period of expansion, and for measuring the subsequent losses of depression. Much information not directly utilized for the purpose of this book will be found in the figures of farm income, expense and debt. These figures may be used to throw light on such questions as the optimum size of farm, the importance of heavy debts as compared with the burden of the tariff, the controversial question of the thrift of western farmers, the amount of work done, the demand for hired labour, and the extent to which it is possible to live off the land. In short, the information contained in these surveys furnishes a profitable source of material for the student of Western Canada.

A lengthy introduction is followed by chapters on ranching, land tenure and investment. The approach is primarily historical and provides a healthy corrective to the limitations of the survey method employed in the remaining chapters. The discussion of ranching contains well-documented material for the early period but hardly gives adequate attention to developments since the decline of the open range. The treatment of land tenure gives a well proportioned picture of the historical background, but the statistical analysis is much weaker. The only chapter in which a general interpretation is attempted deals with "investment in farms". Here Professor Murchie's technique confuses changes in farmers' investments with changes in land values. The whole problem, raised in volumes I and IV of this series, of the relation of debt and debt charges to a fluctuating income has been obscured in elaborate and not very trustworthy estimates of net worth. Professor Allen's broader treatment of the Kindersley area is more satisfactory.

The reports of the field surveys, occupying the latter and more useful half of the volume, vary in content and method of presentation. Those on Kindersley, Dauphin and Medicine Hat are the least difficult to read. The results on the whole are too condensed to be made a basis of further statistical

study, while the absence of explanatory notes on method leaves unanswered a hundred controversial questions upon which the validity of the argument depends. These chapters remind one of government reports which try to describe statistics instead of interpreting them. If more time and care had been devoted to interpreting and co-ordinating the survey material the presentation would have been more effective and the volume more useful. A happier effect has been achieved by the authors of the appendices in their treatment of the trend toward mechanization and the problems of power farming.

The enquiry tends to show that a farmer's ability to repay his debts, even in the years before the depression, was largely governed by the period in which he acquired his farm. Those who homesteaded and later extended their holdings to a more economic size showed the best record, while many of those who bought at inflated prices in the post-war period (with encouragement from governments and other leaders) had on balance become poorer rather than richer. All the evidence emphasizes that western agriculture was already bearing the scars of inflation and deflation at the time the present depression began.

G. E. BRITNELL.
D. C. MacGREGOR.

Pogrom

THE YELLOW SPOT: by a group of investigators, with an introduction by the Bishop of Durham; Gollancz-Ryerson; \$1.50 (paper) and \$2.50 (cloth); pp. 287.

THE authors set out to prove that persecution of the Jews in Germany has not abated but has, on the contrary, become a campaign for their extermination, carried on with unremitting vigour and systematic ferocity by the party in power. They have chosen to use evidence mainly from National-Socialist sources and have no difficulty in establishing their contention. The Nuremberg decrees which, among many other disabilities, make marriage between Jew and Gentile a crime punishable by penal servitude, were adopted only in September 1935. The Jew in Germany has no rights, no hope of redress in the courts, little chance of a living, and the greatest difficulty in obtaining, even for ready cash, the very necessities of life. His religion is subject to the foulest calumnies and he himself exposed to violent bodily harm and perpetual humiliation, while the minds of German children are poisoned with doctrines of race superiority as dangerous as they are ridiculous.

There is no need to quote from the many examples of physical violence and murder, whether in the country at large or concentration camps; but, as illustrations of the lengths to which the 'Aryan' nonsense will go, may be mentioned the Jewish doctor who was sent to a concentration camp for giving of his blood to save the life of a German patient by transfusion, and the decree of Goebbels prohibiting the inscription of the names of Jews on rolls of honour or memorials of the Great War.

No other civilized country has in modern times tolerated such a terrible exhibition of barbarism within its own borders. The murder or beating up

of political opponents has frequently taken place elsewhere—but radical leaders, pacifists or counter-revolutionaries make a deliberate choice with the certain knowledge that in moments of crisis little mercy may be shown to them; one had hoped that the persecution and attempted extermination of in-offensive citizens on grounds of race or religion alone was a form of oppression that the white man's civilization had left behind once and for all. Even this hope has now been disappointed.

And in view of the many examples of hostility to the persecutions on the part of Germans themselves, of the innumerable Germans who have risked exposure as 'Jew-lackeys', loss of job and even concentration camp, in order to help a Jewish neighbour, it is impossible to comfort ourselves with the thought that we are not as other men. Rather we see here the savage extremes that follow from the defeat in war and the humiliation of a great nation, the terrible price that may have to be paid by those who allow their self-styled strong men to establish themselves in power by the support of the worst elements in the country.

But if we must not find comfort in self-righteousness, neither should we allow ourselves to be lulled into forgetfulness by glib official assurances to foreign bodies, or endorse the easy assertion of the International Olympic Committee that Germany is "in every way living up to the Olympic rules". This is obviously not true, either in the field of sport or in any other.

A terrible but necessary book to read.

G. M. A. GRUBE.

Femininity or Feminism?

THE SCHOOL OF FEMININITY: Margaret Lawrence; Nelson, Toronto; pp. xii, 382. \$3.50.

THE thesis of this book seems to be that the aesthetic temperament is foreign to women, that it is almost impossible for a woman to be a first-rate artist, living for instance as a man may do, for the love of writing. Her main urge is biological—that is her doom. No young woman takes to writing, or to art of any sort, unless the law of her being has been frustrated, unless she has been foiled in her search for a man and a baby. This leaves feminine art then to the warped young, the frigid, the middle-aged and the old, the last three being summarily categorized as driven to writing to save the remnant of experience to comfort their old age, or to win peace through the formalizing of their suffering. The artist is the rare woman who can adjust the racial pull and the aesthetic urge. "The woman of the literary temperament is a woman who has emerged an artiste out of the contention within herself of two conflicting forces. Her womanhood wants to be at peace with itself. It needs for its peace to be lost in the race. The litterateur in her wants no peace. It wants change and movement and complete containment in itself. Self-containment as it grows in a woman tends to make her less attractive erotically and it resents any use made of her as a vessel of the race. The pull of the race in her resents the onset of self-containment". When a woman can adjust herself to the two she performs a miracle.

But Miss Lawrence is really not concerned with miracles or 'artistes', although she notes four—'Mansfield, Cather, Dane and Woolf'. She is mainly and very properly concerned with the whole troupe of women, big and little, from Jane Austen to Fannie Hurst, who have found their way into print, and who have been illustrating her thesis for her by busily jumping to and fro the gap between 'economic need' and 'biological urge', showing in their writing the strain of it. If Jane Austen's position at the head of this herd seems a little anomalous, one must remember that she left 'little ivories, but no little son,' and that she burnt out at forty from frustration. As is evident it is a most provocative thesis, but none the less fresh and stimulating for women. Miss Lawrence shows that with the feminist revolt the difficulties increased for women writers, sex consciousness and sex antagonism naturally deepening the already existing conflict going on within them—all of which found expression in a variety of ways undreamed of by the few solitary women included in the nineteenth century school of femininity. They have now become such a multitude that Miss Lawrence has had to kennel them in groups with appropriate labels as 'Little Girl Pals', 'Go-getters', 'Matriarchs', 'Helpmeets', 'Sophisticated Ladies', 'Priestesses' and the above mentioned 'Artistes' (as one might say Alsatians, Chows, Pomeranians, bitches all). True it may sound odd, but it is none the less good spade work for her feminist thesis, good classification for scientific data. If she had kept to that interest throughout the whole book she would have done a clean piece of work. Moreover, she would have spared herself the inaccuracies of her literary history, in the statements for instance about Jane Austen and the Brontes, and use the indiscriminations of her literary criticism with its levelling use of superlatives and the necessity to consider Gentlemen Prefer Blondes, So Big, Precious Bane, and The Good Earth all as literature.

None the less this is a book which women should read and argue about, comparing it with Mrs. Woolf's *A Room of One's Own*, and going further. She perhaps minimized the 'biological doom', insisting that women should write by hook or crook, finding somehow independence and leisure not only for their own sakes but to create a tradition for the greater woman who should come, Shakespeare's sister, who if born with his dramatic gift (as science tells us might have been the case) would never have had a chance without generations of writing women behind her. Let them write without a grievance, sex-whole, cultivating the male and female sides of their minds, like Shakespeare, androgynous.

But we can hardly leave it there. Endless new possibilities suggest themselves in a generation where collectivist politics are effecting a cure for this sickness of sex-antagonism by sending all the women back to their biological functioning, or by sending them all to work side by side with men in arts and trades. And what might not happen if there were a whole generation of girl-children, not merely a handful, brought up to weave, paint, sing, create as freely and naturally as they walk, especially if they had physical vitality enough to satisfy both impulses?

GLADYS DAVIS.

The Shakespeare Man

SHAKESPEARE: John Middleton Murry; Cape-Nelson. \$4.50; pp. 448.

THE failing of the older romantic critics was that, in their zeal to exalt the Shakespeare who wrote 'for all time', they tended to forget that he was also 'of an age'. The realists of the twentieth century have corrected that error with a vengeance. They have maintained that Shakespeare's timelessness can be realized only in terms of his time and have brought to the fore the Elizabethan playwright whose art is conditioned by contemporary theatrical practices and must be interpreted through the alleged psychological limitations of his original audience. Mr. Middleton Murry, while fully aware of this recent historical criticism, reaffirms the receptive and self-submissive attitude of the romantics. He holds that there is an instantly felt discrepancy between Shakespeare and the application of "a rigorous critical method". He boldly states that his aim is to try to identify himself with Shakespeare as a force of Nature, "to experience him as life proceeding out of a particular country at a particular moment of history, feeling its way by instinct and through consciousness to the completest utterance of the mystery of life itself."

The start is disappointing. Relying on intuition, he picks out a few passages which point "compulsively" to actual incidents in Shakespeare's life. The figure from Henry IV, Part II, of the "offensive wife" who to protect herself from her angry husband, "holds his infant up", is taken as convincing proof that Shakespeare was unhappily married. Leaving such hazardous trivialities, he turns to the story of the Sonnets; and here becomes really interesting. Shakespeare, he holds, had through the stress of the plague years, sought and gained the patronage of Southampton. The friendship ended in Shakespeare's disillusionment, but its vital issue was that he accepted his destiny as the people's dramatist. This was the first crucial moment in his dramatic evolution. "Theatrical necessity, the immediate relation to an audience of flesh and blood, became instinctive to him. It was the foundation of his poetry". He had achieved independence by the support of the English people and became their voice. In the succession of histories which follow Richard III, all written to satisfy the exigencies of Shakespeare's life, Mr. Murry finds the creative expression of the growing self-consciousness of the nation.

One of his main theses is the emergence of "the Shakespeare man", the figure with which Shakespeare could identify himself. He is not in all the plays; nor are those in which he appears, artistically the best. "The Shakespeare man" in his very vitality tends to take control. His first form is the Bastard, his last and fullest embodiment is in Hamlet, with whose death he finally disappears—"dying into life". In his general argument here Mr. Murry carries us interestedly with him. He is less convincing in his interpretation of the Hamlet play. There he finds the main dramatic motive, the line of Hamlet's progress, in his conquering the fear, instilled by the ghost, of the unknown after death. Like so many others, Mr. Murry seems to find in the play what he sought in it. Few would agree that he has

unbare its central theme.

The best chapters are those on the later plays. Such lapses as an unexpected inability to appreciate Lear are richly retrieved. Mr. Murry's revelation of the Macbeth tragedy is a triumph of imaginative insight. Nothing better has been written on Antony and Cleopatra than his exposition of the significance of "royal". The chapter on Tragedy And The Imagination is somewhat cloudy, but he subtly traces Shakespeare's growing mastery of language, a development coincident with the increasing power to identify himself imaginatively with his characters.

If, in this spiritual history of Shakespeare, Mr. Murry seemed to start lamely, any such impression is gone long before we reach the end. With all our reservations what seems to stay with us is a sense of the book's rightness and richness. He justifies what he himself maintains, that, despite all the findings of recent historical criticism, the substance of the 'romantic' criticism is left intact.

R. S. KNOX.

Lope De Vega

FOUR PLAYS BY LOPE DE VEGA: In English Versions with an Introduction by John Garrett Underhill; New York, Charles Scribner's Sons; pp 385. \$2.75.

WHEN Hazlitt exclaimed testily that he hated the nonsensical stories about Lope de Vega and his writing a play before breakfast, he did the Spaniard an injustice which may account for the fact that few of Lope de Vega's plays have been translated into English. On the occasion of the tercentenary celebrations in honor of the Spanish dramatist, Underhill brings out his English versions of four plays, *A Certainty for a Doubt*, *The King the Greatest Alcalde* (previously translated), *The Gardener's Dog* (accessible as *The Dog in the Manger*), and *Fuente Ovejuna*. For good measure there is included an essay by the contemporary dramatist, Jacinto Benavente, on *Some Characteristics of the Spanish Theatre of the Golden Age*. Benavente, who has translated and adapted into Spanish some of Shakespeare's plays, is familiar with the drama of both countries. Some of his brilliant generalizations are very suggestive. He observes, for instance, that both dramas have much in common by virtue of their origins in popular tradition and the influence they show of Italian letters. There is much truth in his contention that the woman of both theatres is no lady's daughter, but springs, in a moral age, from the courtesan of Latin and Italian plays and novels. Young women of good family did not wander about as freely as the theatre would have us suppose.

Of the four plays translated by Underhill, *Fuente Ovejuna* (a Castilian village) will arouse most curiosity and interest. It has received much publicity of late through its adoption by Soviet Russia for purposes of propaganda. The play represents powerfully the epic struggle of a community against a villainous knight commander. When the people put him to death and King Ferdinand inquires as to who committed the deed, he receives as his only reply from the three hundred people that *Fuente Ovejuna* did it. The king shows himself merciful. One wonders what alterations have been made here in the Russian version. Underhill's renderings are spirited,

but frequently inaccurate in detail. By intermingling occasional verse in his prose, the poetical quality of the original is in part preserved.

M. A. BUCHANAN.

Novels

THE SOUND WAGON: T. S. Stribling; Doubleday Doran; pp. 404. \$2.25.

THIS novel is yet another exposure of what journalists are fond of calling the American scene, as if there were any contours to be discerned. It is more than ugly: it makes one feel sick, as a parent might on bending over his child's cot and finding there a strange little boy with two noses and a mouth in the back of his head, but wearing the familiar pyjamas.

What makes the United States (as here and elsewhere depicted) so heart-breaking is not sin, vulgarity or blockheadedness—these you may find in rich profusion elsewhere—so much as the sense that you are exploring a colossal pawnshop, crowded with objects that had a meaning, perhaps a vast importance, somewhere else but which here jostle one another with a hideous clash of contradictory associations. America is a welter of fine and beautiful things torn from their context, heaped together and sterilized by an insatiable money-lust that has destroyed the soul of a continent, or so Americans themselves tell us.

I need only cite the loathsome fact that a frequent compliment to the woman a man loves is "You look like a million dollars". Amidst this welter of utterly degraded politics and social corruption, this riot of artless devilry, strange reminiscences of decency pop horribly up:

"Mr. Myerberg", said the racketeer, moved perhaps for the first time in his life, "I know how Mr. Caridius feels. I know how a man loves some other woman. Yes, I understand. I was a pimp once before I became a racketeer. I know love . . ."

Readers of Mr. Stribling's magnificent earlier novels may wonder why he troubled to produce this dull and sub-human farrago. No doubt his aim was to do good; and I hope he may. But why should people outside America plough through all this? Because the horrors now raging in the United States are beginning to raise their heads elsewhere; and if we have any desire for self-preservation we shall take our precautions while they are comparatively easy to take. If we follow the usual course, which is to laugh at "cranks" while the evils are incipient, and when they have grown to gigantic strength refuse "to put the clock back" or "to fight the machine in which we are all cogs", we shall meet the just doom of those who feed on phrases instead of remembering that national health, like bodily health, needs incessant vigilance.

GILBERT NORWOOD.



MR. WHITE, THE RED BARN, HELL and BRIDE-WATER: Four stories by Booth Tarkington; Doubleday Doran; \$1.25. pp. 126.

THESE stories are a distinct departure from the direct and gentle satire of Mr. Tarkington's work as we have been hitherto familiar with it. But since it is the fortieth in a list of by no means undistinguished contributions to American literature, it may be considered that Mr. Tarkington has come to that time when he need not apologize for conjecturing upon immortality. This, too, in spite of his latest novel, *The Lorenzo Bunch*, in which his gift for urbane irony, his unmistakable facility in transcribing American middle class speech, is as great as it ever was.

"Shall I still know that I am everlasting when my body has been dispersed into dust?" is the question which the author has put to himself and to which he makes four characters try to find the answer. But there doesn't seem to be an answer. Possibly he found one while he was composing these slightly embittered stories but it is doubtful that the reader will arrive at any solution, for, while Mr. Tarkington's philosophies may be quite sincere, they are confused and hesitant. Anyway it is always a difficult task to marry the abstract with the concrete in fiction, particularly when it is the author's first attempt in this direction, so it would not be a fair estimate of these stories to judge them by the novels that have preceded them. As an experiment they are justified on the strength of Mr. Tarkington's reputation and years, as reading they are interesting as everything of the author's always is, but as an invasion into a realm in which better equipped writers have had little success, they are of no particular significance.

ELEANOR GODFREY.

NO VILLAIN NEED BE: Vardis Fisher; Doubleday Doran. \$2.50. pp. 387.

THIS title, like the other three of the tetralogy, is taken from five lines of George Meredith. There is neither time nor space here to discuss the business of choosing titles but the merits of this device may be pointed out; for one thing it relieves the author of the disproportionate amount of mental labour he usually expends on his title, also the responsibility for the phrasing lies with the source, and the continuity desired in a series is obtained. In this particular instance one very good title resulted, namely that of the second book, *Passions Spin The Plot*.

Of this fourth book the publishers say it may be read "without the background of its predecessors". Possibly this is true, but it seems to this reviewer that the patience required to follow the tortuous maturity of Vridar Hunter must have some foundation on an acquaintance with his childhood and adolescence. For Vridar Hunter is the possessor of one of those terribly harassed but superior intelligences not found, let us hope, outside literature. Nevertheless no matter how unreal such characters are, no matter how fantastic their struggles with their unruly selves, the process by which they eventually resolve themselves in the last chapter of the last volume, can be quite engrossing. It is *No Villain Need Be*.

Mr. Fisher's writing is considerably improved; May, 1936.

it is smooth if not polished and the choice of words more thoughtful and reasoned, although in their desperate originality they still remind one of the precipitous Thomas Wolfe.

ELEANOR GODFREY.

Miscellaneous

THE PEOPLE'S YEARBOOK 1936: published by the Co-operative Wholesale Society, Manchester; 1s. (paper) and 3s. (cloth); pp. 331.

All those interested in the co-operative movement will find in this compilation of the British C.W.S. (1, Balloon Street, P.O. Box 53, Manchester), valuable and adequate information about the work and progress of co-operative enterprises in England, the Empire and the world at large, during the last year. But this by no means exhausts the interest of the volume which also contains authoritative discussions of social and economic problems in Britain, such as housing, medical services, wages and prices, trades union activities and the like. Nor are world problems such as war and the colonial question forgotten. There is also a wealth of statistical information about population, etc., not easily accessible elsewhere to the ordinary reader. The attempted surveys of arts and science are somewhat crowded out, but the book as a whole is a competent and interesting digest of events in Britain that we want to know about, with at times revealing illustrations.

G. M. A. G.

PUTTING THE CONSTITUTION TO WORK: Harry Laidler; League for Industrial Democracy; pp. 38. 25c.

This is the second of the 1936 series of studies issued by the L.I.D. (112, East 19th Street, New York City). The author gives us an extremely clear, concise and informative discussion of the breakdown of the American Constitution, and in particular of the position of the Supreme Court. A brief historical survey clarifies the doubtful origins of those powers and an analysis of past Amendments and Supreme Court decisions fully justifies the assertion that "the Constitution of the United States, as interpreted by the Supreme Court, is greatly delaying the people . . . in their fight to abolish child labor, to enact social security and minimum wage legislation . . ." as well as many other reforms. For there can be no doubt that, as an eminent authority puts it: "Constitutional law is just what the judges make it".

Of special interest are the discussion of recent decisions on the New Deal legislation and Mr. Laidler's suggestions of the remedies to improve the working of the Constitution and the position of the Court.

G. M. A. G.



NO YES-MEN

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